*Studies on Orissan History, Vol. I.*

# NEW ASPECTS OF THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF SOUTH ORISSA



*Edited by*

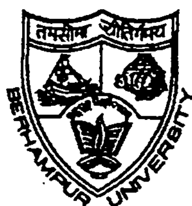
Shishir Kumar Panda

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# NEW ASPECTS OF THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF SOUTH ORISSA

*Edited by*

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# *New Aspects of the History and Culture of South Orissa*

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# *Editorial*

The Post Graduate Department of History is one of the foremost departments of Berhampur University marching ahead with academic excellence since its inception. In recognition to the academic achievements, University Grants Commission has sanctioned the Special Assistance Programme at DRS level to the Department from the academic session 1999-2000 for a period of five years. Under this programme, the Department has undertaken a major project on the "Survey of Rushikulya Valley" where all the faculty members worked successfully and produced the research papers of the individual projects. Besides, the Department conducted Seminars, Conferences organized Refresher Courses and guest lectures. With a modest financial grant, the department has not only equipped herself with modern electronic gadgets and computers but also able to conduct research and teaching in a scientific way. The total outcome of the research project enabled the Department for upgradation of the Special Assistance Programme by U.G.C. to level-II at DRS for a period of another five years. Under this programme, the Department is publishing a bi-annual an inter-disciplinary journal, *Studies in History and Culture*.

Most outstanding achievement of the department is the grant of Assistance for Strengthening of Infrastructure for Humanities and Social Sciences (ASIHSS) Programme by U.G.C. from the year 2006 to 2011. Under this programme, we have received a modest publication grant. So we have planned to publish five volumes focusing on some unexplored or new aspects of the history and culture of Orissa. In this first volume, we have decided to publish mainly on the history and culture of South Orissa which is our main thrust area of study. In the present volume, our faculty members have contributed their findings of their individual projects. Also, we have invited articles from the scholars who are working on South Orissa. The present volume contains sixteen articles covering from the pre-historic times to the modern period.

Rabi Narayan Dash's article entitled, "Pre-history and Proto-history of South Orissa" mainly deals with a neglected field of Orissan pre-history. So far no scientific research have been undertaken to explore the pre-history and pro-history of South Orissa. The author on the basis of his field study has attempted to explore the Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic culture of South Orissa which provides a missing link to the archaeology of Eastern India.

"The Making of Early South Orissa: An Overview" by Bhairabi Prasad Sahu makes an attempt to show the process of state formation in early South Orissa with a theoretical framework. In his opinion the earliest manifestation of institutionalized state in Kalinga is visible from the time of Kharavela. But this was possible because of the changes within the society as well as Mauryan interaction with the region. There was a great deal of social and political growth including the rise of chieftainships with its interaction with Gangetic Northern India. The pattern of development in Kalinga shows the emergence of a society in transition to the early historical period which is loosely structured, not very well organized primarily agrarian in nature.

Snigdha Tripahy has edited a newly found copper plate sets in her article, "Jhāḍasāhi Copper Plate Charter of Raṇabhañja Pṛthivīkalaśa of Vañjulvaka" which throws new light on the history of the Bhanjas of Vanjulvaka. She has identified Ranabhanja Prthivikalasa, the issuer of the charter as the younger brother of Nettabhanja II Prthvikalasa and provides a new genealogical table of the Bhanjas of Khinjali Mandala. She has also given reading of the texts of the copper plates with photo plates. This paper would help the scholars for further research on the history of the Bhanjas.

The paper, "Temples of the Jagamanda Hill and its Archaeological Remains" by Shishir Kumar Panda is based on his field study. The paper not only describes the temples of the Jagamanda hill but also discusses it archaeological remains. The most important discussion is that the author has contested the Buddhist affiliation of the Jagamanda hill and opines that it was a famous Saivite centre in the tribal heartland of South Orissa.

Chandrabhanu Patel in his paper on "The Later Nalas of Bhimapur" throws light on the history of the Nalas after their decline due to the invasion of the Panduvamsis in Maraguda valley and Rajim regions their original kingdom. After ruling about 160 years, they moved towards north and carved out a principality in Aska region of Ganjam and ruled from their capital Bhimapur. They ruled for many generations till 1230 A.D. when their kingdom was finally conquered by the Imperial Gangas. In his opinion the scions of the Nalas even continued to rule upto 13$^{th}$ century A.D. and present zamindar family of Dharakot claim their descent from the Nala dynasty.

Ananda Chandra Sahoo in his paper, "Jainism in Early Medieval Orissa: A Case Study on South Orissa" not only surveys the rise and spread of Jainism in early medieval Orissa on the basis of literacy, inscriptional and archaeological evidence but also deals with Jain sculptures with special emphasis on the South Orissan findings along with their characteristic features and symbols. In his opinion, though South Orissan Jain sculptures broadly confirm to the iconographic stipulations but the general modeling of the figures have been comparatively crude and many varieties lacked aesthetic sense.

Benudhar Patra has given a general description of the Chilika lake with emphasis on its historical context in his paper, "The Chilika Lake: Its Past and Present". He has discussed the origin and formation of Chilika, its extent and location, its role in the maritime trade, ship building industries and the navigational activities citing archaeological, literary and foreign sources.

"Trade in Southern Orissa in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries" by Lalatendu Das Mohapatra focuses on the coastal trade of South Orissa from the area north of Godavari which was known as Gingelly coast. This coast extended from the Bay of Coringa at the point of Godavari to the Jagannath (Puri) in the north. Though the political condition of the area was marked by a bone of contention between the Mughal rulers of Orissa and the Golconda rulers of South, but it did not affect the trade climate of the region. Mostly trade was continued due to demand and supply of food stuffs from Ganjam which were exported to Madras. But comparatively coastal trade of Ganjam and Gingelly ports could not come up to the mark with Bengal. In the eighteenth century, oceanic trade of Orissa declined.

Biswamoy Pati in his paper, "Storm Over Malkangiri: A Note on Laxman Naiko's Revolt (1942)" examines the colonial nature of socio-economic exploitation of the people of Malkangiri, a tribal populated area of the remote corner of Orissa and posits Laxman Naiko in the process of mobilization and forms of protest which culminated in a great uprising. Parting away from the traditional historiography, Pati locates Laxman Naiko's uprising as a part of Quit Indian Movement, merging with All India Movement and played a unifying role linked with Indian Nationalism. He has suggested that the revolt was due to erosion of traditional rights and creation of new burdens on the people. In his opinion the revolt was neither based on a narrow definition of

nationalism as outlined by the Nationalist historians nor the issues were 'autonomous' or 'local' as the subaltern school of historian would like to observe it. The scholar has observed it as the interaction of Swaraj with the popular revolt which had influenced each other. In this way the work provides a new dimension to the study of Laxman Naiko's revolt.

"Gandhian Cosntructive Activities in South Orissa" by Subash Chandra Padhy presents a synoptic presentation of a macro-level study on the spread of Gandhian constructive activities vis-à-vis National Movement in South Orissa. The scholar has highlighted the political agitational work adopted through the strategy of constructive activities organized for the promotion of khadi, spread of national education, boycott of foreign goods, liquor and social upliftment of harijans as well as awakening against untouchability. These programmes were conducted through formation of ashramas, panchayats, sevadals and training centres which led to the broadening of popular mass movement resulting the spread of nationalistic ideology in South Orissa.

Bina Kumari Sarma's paper, "Spread of Modern Education in South Orissa under British Rule" discusses various attempts made by the Christian Missionaries, colonial government and private enterprises for the spread of modern education in South Orissa. The scholar has rightly pointed out the pioneer role taken by the Christian missionaries not only to educate the masses of the people but also for opening the eyes of the British government for their responsibility in this regard. Without entering into the debate on the exploitative nature of British Raj, various measures taken by the Government for the promotion of primary and higher education has been discussed. The scholar has also analysed various factors that hampered the growth of education, such as tribal nature of the region, dominance of the Telugus in the administration and inclusion of this area under Madras Presidency. Inspite of the attempts South Orissa received little attention from the Government in comparison with other parts of Madras Presidency. As a result, the Oriyas of South Orissa became conscious of the step-motherly attitude of the Government in the field of education, language and culture which culminated in demand for the merger of South Orissa with the main Orissa division.

South Orissa which witnessed one of the early tribal resistance movement against colonial rule in Ghumsur has been analysed by Bishnu Prasad Panda in his paper, "Anti-Colonial Movement in South

Orissa: A Study on Ghumsur Rebellion". Generally, the zamindars acted as agents of colonial rule and mostly resistance movements were raised against them. But in Ghumsur, the kings and the tribals joined together against the colonial rule. Ghumsur raised standard of rebellion against the French rule and British Raj for more than a century which is unique. The leadership was taken over by the king as well as the tribal leaders making it as a multi-dimensional struggle in which all groups of native people including the Rajas, tribals and non-tribals participated.

The role of Koraput district in the National Movement under the banner of Congress party has been dealt by Nihar Ranjan Patnaik in his paper, "Freedom Movement in Koraput District". The scholar has described in detail the spread of Congress party's programmes, Gandhian ideology and course of action during Individual Civil Disobedience Movement, Quit India Movement and August Revolt. The heroic act of the tribals under the leadership of Lakshman Naik and their sufferings have been analysed which has left indelible marks on the history of freedom movement in India.

Many social reformers of Orissa who worked from the grassroot levels to bring social reforms are quite unknown to the scholarly world. Kailash Chandra Dash in his article, "Jayamangal Rath and Dalit Identity in South Orissa" has made an attempt to bring to light the contribution of Jayamangal Rath for bringing dalit identity in South Orissa. Jayamangal Rath, though a Brahmin by birth fought against the prevailing traditional norms of the society and brought reforms by spreading Gandhian ideals, working against untouchability, uplift of harijons, spreading of women education, encouraging widow remarriages and many other social reconstructive programmes on the rural and urban areas of Ganjam and Parlakhemundi.

Folk dance constitute an important aspect of performing art of South Orissa which is one of the important medium of expression of the rural people. Manmath Padhy in his paper, "Performing Art of South Orissa: A Study on Folk Dance" has documented all the popular folk dances of South Orissa which originated from people's religious cults, beliefs and are oganised during festive occasions not only as a form of religious ritual, entertainment but for fellow-feeling, brotherhood and unity among rural people. He has given a detailed description of the dances with their origin, themes, forms, music and local artists participation. The documentation is very vital for the posterity because now they are dying out due to the spread of western music, cinema and television culture.

"Culture of Rayagada District: A Study on Fairs and Festivals" by joint authors Prafulla Kumar Dalai and Ganapati Prasad Choudhury presents a micro-level study on the tradition of fairs and festivals observed by the people of Rayagada district of South Orissa. This study provides a unique feature of Rayagada culture because of its composite population consisting of tribals, Oriyas and Telugus. So there is cross cultural assimilation in this areas where the Oriyas, Telugus and tribals observe each others festivals making it a composite culture for which India is well-known outside the country.

All the above papers presented in this volume are based either on field surveys or original sources with new facts and interpretations highlighting some unknown aspects of South Orissan history and culture. Every sub-region has its peculiarity in history, religious beliefs, culture but they cannot be studied in isolation of the main culture. They are a part of Orissan history and culture. The study of the history and culture of a sub-region would definitely enrich Indian history and culture in general and Orissa in particular.

I am grateful to all my colleagues particularly to Prof. Amiya Kumar Pattanayak, Coordinator of ASIHSS Programme who assigned me this duty to edit the present volume. I thank all the contributors who responded to my request and in a true spirit of scholarship submitted their paper in time. I thank my colleagues for the cooperation and help without which the volume could not have been completed in time. Lastly, but not the least, Sri Pradeep Kumar Panda deserve my thanks who not only did perfect type setting work of the present volume but also helped me in every stage for the manuscript preparation. Also, I thank M/S. Shovan Printers, Bhubaneswar for excellent printing work and brining it out in time.

**Shishir Kumar Panda**

# Pre-History and Proto-History of South Orissa

*Rabi Narayan Dash*

## Geographical Setting

South Orissa comprise the old undivided districts of Koraput and Ganjam which are now vivisected into the districts of Koraput, Rayagada, Gajapati, Ganjam and Malkangiri. The entire area is in between $17^0$.5'N and $19^0$.9'N Latitude and in between $81^0$.3'E and $85^0$.3'E longitudes. The area is bounded by Vijayanagram and Srikakulam districts of Andhra Pradesh in the south east and the south respectively. The Bastar district of Chhattishgarh state lies to the south-west. In the north-west is the Nabarangpur district and in the north the Kalahandi district of Orissa. To the north-east lies Kandhamal and Nayagarh districts of Orissa. The Khurda and Puri districts, the Chilika and the Bay of Bengal are situated to the east and south east of the area respectively. South Orissa is drained by a number of rivers among which the important rivers are Saberi or Kolab, Machkund, Poteru, Indravati which borders the Koraput and Nowrangpur districts, Bansadhara, Rushikulya, Dhanei, Ghodahada, Baghua and Nagavali besides other small rivulets which drains various areas of the region.

The physiography of the region indicate contrasting diversities of high peaked hills, impenetrable jungles, narrow strips of sandy and alluvial plains near the coast and wide open uplands and plateaus. The peaked hills constitute the last point of the eastern ghat hill ranges with an elevation of 915 m. Stepped plateau circumscribed by hill ranges and narrow opening up of valleys drained by hill streams and their tributaries decorate the districts of Koraput, Malkangiri and the north western regions of Gajapati, Rayagada and Ganjam districts. They stretch and sag according to the orientation of the hill ranges and their broken gorges. The forest covers a large part of the region consisting of tropical vegetation. Wild tropical fauna abound in the same expostulating the environment of the primitive man. The total population of the area till July 1993 was 53,61,393 and the total area of the region is 33,323 sq. kms.

The rocks which have bearings on the pre-history of south Orissa area found in different parts of the region. Rocks like Gneiss, Epidiorite, Dolarite, Quartrite, Chert, Chalcedony (rarely), Prophyritic rocks containing Diorite, Igneous, Metamorphic and Sedimentary types are available in groups and intrusive as well as in the form of pebbles and stray mass of rocks in the region. The eastern ghats abode these rocks which were available to the early man for fashioning his tools.

The soil formation consist of red, alluvial, saline, black, forest and hill soils. The lateritic, mixed red and black soils also exist in the region. Red soils, uniformly red and commonly found in tropical humid climates are also found in Koraput. Alluvial soils found in the river terraces range from grey to yellow. The saline soil is found in the Ganjam coast. Loamy and clayey dark brown to deep black soils are found in Koraput district. The forest and hill soils of red, yellow, dark brown to deep black soils are found in Ganjam district. So also the lateritic soil is to be found in Ganjam district. The soils formed by the weathered laterites are to be found widespread in the region.

The earliest human settlement is far from attested. The fossilized form of organic remains have not been recovered so far from the region. But the cultural fossil of the primitive man, so far as this region is concerned has been recovered by explorers at different localities. These are tools belonging to the stone ages, such as, Paleolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, etc.

**Paleolithic Culture**

The earliest cultural relic of man belongs to the Stone Age. It is generally divided into Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic. The Paleolithic Culture evolved from its primitive state to gradually refined position in three phases namely early, middle and upper. South Orissa possesses evidence of such cultures belonging to these phases. The essence of Paleolithic findings in South Orissa lies in the recovery of upper Paleolithic artifacts which so far remained unidentified in the whole of Orissa.

The survey of South Orissa for Paleolithic tools began to yield fruit when S.N. Rath (1965) collected Paleoliths from Kalma in the Chalkamba area.[1] It is situated on the Saranai valley near Gunupur area.

The recovered tools are mainly choppers and scrappers. S.C. Nanda (1975-85) collected upper Paleolithic artifacts from Koraput district during his survey.[2] The survey indicated upper Paleolithic presence in twelve sites on the Indravati basin. These artifacts were recovered from around the Gadaba settlements of the Koraput district. The typologies found by him are flake-blade, blade tool and blade and burin industries. The tools occur in isolated hills tops, slopes, foot hills, plaleaux and on the banks of streams. Shaped tool types of the industry include scrapers, denticulate, notches, borers, burins, backed microblades, microcrescents and knives. Simple artifacts include cores, flakes blades, chips and worked nodules. According to Nanda this is a single homogenous industry though found from the surface only. It is dominated by scrapers. The technique employed is stone hammer at the first instance and blades with prominent bulbs which are subsequently removed from the dressed nodules. Taking into consideration the bulbs of percussion observed on the blades, he has suggested that the technique employed is indirect percussion or punch method to remove blades. A peculiar feature of this culture is the pressure of blades outnumbering the cores. These core might have been used late for the preparation of microblades. This explains to some extent the cultural evolution from upper Paleolithic to that of Mesolithic in Orissa. Nanda has also compared the Indravati upper Paleolithic industry with that of similar cultures at Bhimbetka in Madhaya Pradesh and upper Mahanadi valley in Chhattisgarh, Muchchatla Chintamani Gavi, Nilamalai Erramalai, Nagarjuna Konda, Cuddapah, Renigunta and Bemula sites in Andhra Pradesh, Pratappur, Marvania and Dhekhulia in Bihar, Patna and Bhokak in Maharastra and Shorapur Doab is Karnataka. The comparison has shown that the sites representing the industry in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have more affinities with the industry of the Indravati Valley.

The northern Orissa has so far lacks the presence of an upper Paleolithic culture but the Indravati basin has a developed one which speaks against such a proposition. Thus it has become necessary to search out the missing link denoting the evolution of Mesolithic culture from the early Paleolithic. Nanda has shown that the upper Paleolithic artifacts of the Indravati valley also contain an element of microlithic

tools and the proportion increase when the same is found merged with the Mesolithic proper. The only missing link from lower Paleolithic to the upper Paleolithic is to be found out conclusively to answer an indigenous growth of stone age cultures in the region in particular and Orissa in general.

Besides a stray Paleolithic blank is found from the Rushikulya valley on the National highway near the bridge to Berhampur side recovered by the present author and preserved in the Orissa State Museum and no other relic has come to light in the Ganjam district. As such, the Paleolithic presence with its various phases till the middle of the Mesolithic culture remain a blank in this Ganjam and Koraput region besides findings of Nanda in the Koraput-Kalahandi border on the Indravati valley. What was the cause of this non-availability of prehistoric tools? We may search for the same. It may be due to lack of exploration in this thick forested area impenetrable easily or some other cause may be there. We propose the following explanation as a probable alternative. The human civilization is attested to have emerged with the advent of Paleolithic relics. The earliest phase has been started as per the pre-historians during the lower Pleistocene period which evolved between 1,50,000 years B.P. to 50,000 B.P. (before present). The cultural relics of this period are pebble tool industry of a limited occurrence belonging to pre-Paleolithic stage. But such tools have not been recovered in South Orissa. On the other hand S.N. Rath had recovered choppers and scrapers belonging to the lower Pleistocene period of a subsequent phase which may come under the time bracket of 1,50,000-50,000 BP. But no tool of subsequent phase could be available either due to the extinction or exodus of human stock from this area. It may also be due to the change of environment. During our survey in Koraput and Ganjam (both undivided) districts on the Bansadhara river valley, we have come across heavy deposits of volcanic ash. The survey was carried in association with the Bhubaneswar branch of the Geological Survey of India for the deposits of the Pleistocene geological period. The senior geologist A.K. Misra and his associates Mr. Rao and Mr. Misro got these ashes examined chemically. So they came to know that the volcanic ash from Bansadhara valley have affinities with the ashes that emerged from the Toba volcanic hills of the north Sumatra

area. The analysis of the Toba volcanic ashes proves that they have come from volcanic lava and the contents belonged to 75,000 years BC. This further proves that the ash erupted from the Sumatra Volcanic hills have travelled upto the Ganjam and Koraput area of Orissa blown by wind. This creates another possibility that this ash might have found deposited in other areas of Orissa. It is said that at places in Dhenkanal district such ash deposits have come to light. But investigation on the same remains in the primary stage.

The volcanic ash deposits on the Banshadhara river valley has spread about one hundred meters, twenty meters wide and with a height of 0.9144 meters. This deposit is witnessed on the left bank of the river near the Karini village in between Gumda and Gunupur. Near this area the ash is seen deposited in different dimensions and the present author has witnessed the same during his survey. In this mission, Sri Misra the geologist and his friends helped the author for which prehistoric survey was conducted with the Geological Survey of India. Further on the way from Gumuda to Rayagada about nine kms from Ramnaguda, a small deposit of this ash is found to the western sides. About twenty kms from Gunupur near the border of Jaltar village by the side of a small stream to the left side of the Bansadhara river a small mound of such ash deposit is found. Similarly near Hathipathar water falls of Rayagada area volcanic ash deposits are to be seen.

What is the significance of this ash? In the long past their deposit at different places must be assessed and what influence it caused on the environment during the early Paleolithic times since in the middle phase of this period, i.e. 75,000 BC which is the time period of its deposit. As the growth of Paleolithic into other stages from the lower Paleolithic is not attested in this area and the upper Paleolithic culture of the Indravati valley seems to be an intrusion from the neighbourhood to that area naturally, we feel that the volcanic ash deposits prevented its revolution after 75,000 B.C. This fact is also corroborated from the research undertaken by the 'Deccan Institute' of the Deccan College, Pune. By the valley of Kukudi river flowing near the Nimgaon and Pimplewandi villages have shown that at Bori Paleolithic stone age cultures have been recovered from below such deposits. Similarly above the deposits of such ash, prehistoric tools of a subsequent phase have come to light.

This has been identified with the stone age of India along with the volcanic ash belonging to 1,40,000 B.C. Besides this, an equivalent date is indicated in the old stone age cultures of Africa and Israel with the prime ash and Paleolithic culture. This fact has enhanced the significance of the ash deposits of the Bansadhara valley vis-à-vis the Paleolithic and subsequent stone age cultures of South Orissa. The volcanic ash deposits of Pune area are found related to the Toba volcanic ash of Sumatra which is also a fact in the ash qualities of the Bansadhar valley. This tells on the prehistoric culture of South Orissa.

Sri Raghunath of A.S.I. (survey branch), S.C. Nanda, V.N. Mishra and others have recovered Late Stone Age artifacts and Neolithic relics, i.e. axes etc. from the Koraput and Rayagada area. Now the relation of this volcanic ash with the stone age cultures of south Orissa is to be assessed on priority basis. The present author has recovered two flakes of the late phase of Microlithic culture from a mound of sand deposits on the opposite side of the ash deposits on the Bansadhara valley. But this survey was very brief and stray.[3]

**Mesolithic Culture**

The Mesolithic culture of Orissa is represented by point, blade and burin artifacts increasingly of Microlithic nature. The studies on Mesolithic culture of South Orissa by Nanda and by others with different nomenclatures following the upper Paleolithic and preceding the late stone age (Neolithic) culture are represented in raw materials like fine-grained chert, quartz, chalcedony, agate, jasper, opal etc. The exploration of S.N. Raghunath of Archaeological Survey of India in Burdakhol, Chammakhandi, Kukudakhandi, Pattagadh, Ratnapur and Santumba of the Ganjam district brought to light the microlithic artifacts.[4] Nanda conducted excavation at Girla a site on the Indravati valley of the Koraput district. The purpose was to compare the excavated and surface collections regarding typology, raw material and frequency of occurrence, etc. This was intended to prove the authenticity of the surface artifacts and to confirm the sequential occurrences. Typologically the Mesoliths, include retouched, truncated, blunted-back blades etc. There are also points, crebcents, triangles and trapezes. The flake tools include points, notch, borer, burin, various types of scrapers, denticulates, knives etc. The simple artifacts include cores, flakes,

blades, chips, artifacts include cores, flakes, blades, chips, worked nodules and micro-burins. Other artifacts include hammer stones, ring stones and grinding stones so far believed to be in the Neolithic tool repertoire are interesting recoveries. This can only suggest that he Mesolithic culture made inroads to the Neolithic cultural horizons or as per the opinion of Tripathy their continuity to the Neolithic stone age long after those were discarded from use and mode of life of the people are retained lately. However, Nanda has made elaborate comparison of this culture with that of Singhabhum sites (Bihar), Birbhanpur (West Bengal), Tirupati, Vedulla Cheruvu and Madhyakadam (Andhra Pradesh), Teri (Tamil Nadu), Shovapur Doab and Sangakallu (Karnataka), Palghat and Malappuram (Kerala), Patna and Inamgaon (Maharashtra), Laughnaj (Gujarat), Bagor and Tilwara (Rajasthan), Adamgarh and Bhimbetka (Madhya Pradesh), Chitrakot and upper Mahanadi valley (Chattishgarh earlier Madhya Pradesh), and Surai Nahar Rai and Chapani Mandu (Uttar Pradesh). He has concluded that the artifacts from the sites of Madhya Pradesh and Chattishgarh have more affinities with the south Orissan artifacts from the Indravati basin. Further, he has viewed that Indravati basin represents hunting – gathering camp and tool preparation sites.

The present scholar explored the workel river valley a tributary of Poteru river in 1979 around Balimela. It yielded microliths which included lunates, blades, scrapers and cores. Microliths were also found from Chitrakonda on the Sileru river which are similar to the above types. The materials are chert, quartz and jasper. Another important artifact group includes hammer stones, anvils, ring stones and retouchers along with horsehoof cores, pointed pebbles and choppers. In his view these tools are a part and parcel of Mesolithic tool assemblage. Explaining the occurrence of such artifacts a functional perspective has been advanced with the nomenclature of "heavy tool component" citing examples from different aborigines in Australia, Africa and New Guinea. He has suggested that their use was for wood working cutting, splitting, boring, chopping, scraping, butchering, pounding, grinding etc. operation in the context of "forest efficiency".[5] This phenomenon has been cited for corroboration from the collection of Nanda in Koraput. Whether the findings of Nanda are to be remodeled?

Nanda has confirmed that the Mesolithic culture in south Orissa is post of upper Paleolithic and pre-Neolithic in date.

**Neolithic Culture**

The ground and polished stone tools and pottery have been attested from south Orissa. Neolithic artifacts were first found from Jaugada in the Ganjam district of South Orissa in course of an excavation conducted by D. Mitra (1956-57) of the A.S.I.[6] The associated finds in included black and red ware. The tools bear oblong sections. Prusty collected some neoliths from Narayanapatna area of Koraput district associated with pottery equivalent to that of Kuchai. Besides Nanda collected ringstones from Indravati basin.

The typology of the neoliths in the region include axe, chisel, ringstones, etc. The former two types indicate quadrangular form, quadrangular butt, rectangular butt and poll and fully ground technology. The working end modification dominatingly bi-level and blade edges sharper either straight or convex. In majority of cases the cross-section is dominatingly rectangular. The Jaugada types include pointed and oval types besides the quadrangular.

The culminating phase of the neoliths found in the urbanized culture of Jaugada. As per Mitra, at this site a Neolithic culture was found vaguely represented at the site by a few stone cells of oblong section, all surface finds, excepting one occurring immediately above the natural soil and seemingly associated with black and red ware (Mitra 1956-57: Pl. XLIII A.27). Probably the pottery is chalcolithic in origin because of a few copper and bronze objects equivalent to that of Sisupalgarh have been recovered from this site.

The pottery types from Taming in Koraput district are generally of three varieties. These are ring-necked coarse grained red ware, flat bottomed, funnel shaped and brown coloured ware, and out-turned rim, rounded body, soft carrinated waist with darkish brown colour. The last type has affinities with a chalcolithic Banas culture type having slight variation. Even these pottery types can be compared with that of the Tamilnadu types in fabric. Probable reconstruction indicate the types as vase, bowl and pitcher.

Protohistoric urban culture probably replaced the Neolithic in this region. Evidences of the source are forthcoming from Jaugada where chalcolithic pottery and copper tools in the restricted manner super-imposed the Neolithic. This was again replaced by early historic iron culture and pottery. These cultural types are comparable to Sisupalgarh cultural superposition exposed by Lal. Though evidences of Chalcolithic or copper-hoard cultural relics have exclusively not been coming out at present, yet in periphery areas the recovery of chalcolithic culture at Golabai indicate such a proposition.

The exploration of the author in the Koraput district during 1979 has brought to light two early iron implements resembling chisel types from Tentuligada near Gamphakonda main canal of the Balimela area. These types are equivalent to chisels with wider cutting edges, elongated and flat body, straight and convex cutting edge-lines with quadrangular butts and sides. The workmanship is crude and with weathered surfaces. Probably this type is unique and never before were recovered anywhere from Orissa or surrounding regions. From this spot, during the digging out of land for the main canal the rim portion of a copper vessel, bangles and broken copper sword associated with pottery were recovered by the canal workers from 7 ft. below the surface. These were deposited with the contractor. But the efforts of the author failed to locate the same. As such valuable copper-hoard cultural relics were lost. Whether these iron objects are Megalithic in origin or replicas of chisel types in copper are not known. However, iron slags are available from various localities of Koraput district. It explains their origin in the very late Neolithic or late Chalcolithic period. The tools resemble stone chisel types found from Sankerjang in Angul district. The technique of their manufacture is hard to contemplate. Yet it is likely that the tools were prepared in a casting process. Though iron ore is available in and around the region it is difficult to locate the mining area or the source of the raw material for tools.[7]

Living megalithic monuments particularly menhirs are to be found in Koya settlements of the Koraput district with elaborate functions to raise the same in the memory of the departed. The Gadabas practise a different type known as 'sodor'. These are horizontal stone slabs arranged in almost circular manner. Even the Gonds, Kondhs and

Saoras of South Orissa set up different types of stone monuments in honour of the dead. These practices are remnants of the megalithic culture flourished at the fag end of the Neolithic times meant for the propitiation of the departed and are also related to the agricultural operations. But its archaeological missing link is yet to be discovered.

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# The Making of Early South Orissa: An Overview

***Bhairabi Prasad Sahu***

The earliest manifestation of some form of institutionalized state in early Kalinga is visible under Kharavela. It seems to have derived itself partly from changes coming from within local society as well as the Mauryan interaction with the region, as were the contemporaneous, comparable developments in the Deccan.[1] The details of the processes leading to this are exasperatingly elusive in the archaeological record.[2] The two sets of Ashokan major rock edicts at Dhauli and Jaugada suggest that the Mahanadi delta and Rushikulya valley were hubs of activity during the Mauryan period. Ashokan Kalinga roughly extended from Cuttack-Puri area to modern Ganjam-Srikakulam districts. It is necessary to mention that the term Kalinga had varying connotations at different points of history, and probably covered the area up to Godavari-Krishna along the Andhra coast in the early historical period.[3] Coming back to the Mauryan times, it is difficult to be precise about the administrative details and its consequences, on the basis of the available inscriptional and archaeological evidence. We can however infer that there was a great deal of socio-political flux following the end of the Nanda-Maurya experience and the regions interaction with Gangetic northern India. Maximum opportunities for socio-political growth, including the rise of chieftainships, would have arisen at the centres of Mauryan interaction in the wake of such momentous development. The hitherto co-opted periphery or 'locality' elites, with their power and status certainly enhanced within their own societies because of the said association with imperial power, could now acquire a more meaningful and visible political profile.[4]

Sisupalgarh, identified with Tosali, one of the administrative centres of Ashokan Kalinga near Dhauli, has produced evidence for continuous occupation between the earlier part of the third century B.C. and *c.* A.D. 300.[5] It is situated on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar on way to Dhauli. Jaugada, identified with Samapa, the other contemporary political centre in the region, is situated on the bank of the Rushikulya in Ganjam district. Excavations have revealed a full-fledged iron-using culture. The knobbed vessel, scanty remains of brick and stone structures, beads of shell, bone, carnelian agate,etc., and iron objects were recovered from the limited area that was excavated.[6] One Punch-

marked and two Puri-Kushana coins are the other interesting finds. The fortification is roughly square on plan, with two gateways on each side. It consists of an earthen rampart surviving to a height of 25ft at places. The set of Fourteen Rock-edicts and the Puri-Kushana coins set the lower and upper chronological limits of the site. There is a great deal of similarity between the archaeological data from the two sites. At this point, it is imperative to mention that if one is dealing with the historical/cultural region of Kalinga, and not just the modern administrative division of southern Orissa, then it is necessary to take cognizance of sites such as Salihundam and Kalingapatnam in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh, which has produced corresponding material.[7]

It may not be entirely coincidental that the Mahameghavahanas – Kharavela being the third in the family – rose to power around Bhubaneswar and the Mahanadi delta. Besides the advantage of geography and resources, it had a history of association with the Mauryas. Similarly, Kharavela's chief queen came from a ruling lineage with three to four generations of history. She is said to be the daughter of King Lalaka, the grandson or great grandson of Hastisahasa/Hastisimha.[8] The expression *Kalinga purvaraja nivesitam* ( founded by the earlier rulers of Kalinga), in line eleven of the Hathi-gumpha inscription, implies the existence of ruling chiefs in Kalinga prior to the Mahameghavahanas. Inscriptional evidence, thus, indicates the continued presence of 'locality' chiefs in the post-Mauryan period. It may be mentioned that these developments need to be situated in the wider network of the movement of goods and ideas from the Mauryan times onwards. The remains of Northern Black Polished ware from as far as middle coastal Andhra, knobbed ware at sites in coastal Orissa, and rouletted ware all along the east coast unambiguously demonstrate human mobility and interactions.

The adoption of exalted titles such as *chakradharo, chakravarti* and *maharaja* by the Mahameghavahanas need not be taken on the face of it, and the power structure over which they presided needs to be carefully analysed. It is doubtful if they were able to provide for a properly organized political system. There is very little evidence for a state exercising control over a precisely defined territory with the help of an administrative structure, where the command structure and the jurisdiction of the officials were clear. The *mahamada* and *nagara akhadamsa* are two high state functionaries mentioned in the inscriptional records at the Udayagiri-Khandagiri complex.[9] The interpretation of the words *kamma, chulakamma* and *padamulika* is far from

satisfactory, and one is not sure whether the first two constitute personal names or administrative designations.[10] Even if the latter were true, our understanding of the administrative structure is not much enhanced. It is difficult to argue for a state with a large number of officials with distinct responsibilities. The power structure seems to be in an early stage of evolution. Notwithstanding, the evidence for the remission of taxes, there are no dynastic coins. This is particularly surprising because the Hathi-gumpha inscription refers to colossal expenditure on construction enterprises, among other things.[11] One may consider the possibility of some of the Punch-marked coins being in circulation. However, it may be good to remember that coins are statements of royal power, and that the Satavahanas in the Deccan issued them in large numbers with motifs and more than one metal. The absence of dynastic issues in Kalinga, perhaps reflects on the limits of the administrative structure.

The eulogies of war, valour and victory apart, the state under Kharavela with an independent socio-political organization, a vaguely defined territory and an ideology based on reciprocity, involving remission of taxes, entertainment of the people and royal largesse, was an early state. The military successes of Kharavela in general, and his victories over peoples such as the Bhojakas, Rathikas and the inhabitants of Pithunda in particular, seem to have been overstated.[12] These campaigns seem to have been plundering raids, largely because there is nothing to suggest a consolidation of the gains from these conquests. Moreover, these communities in the Deccan were themselves in a stage of transition to the early historical phase.[13] The raids, however, possibly generated the necessary resources for the generous patronage by *maharaja* Kharavela, which consequently helped to consolidate his authority.

The reference to *paurajanapada* in the inscription of Kharavela notwithstanding, the vagueness that surrounds the common people strikes one in the face. One can glean aspects of society depicted in the art of Udayagiri and Khandagiri and the archaeological remains at Sisupalgarh and Jaugada, among others. However, larger issues related to the nature and structure of society are largely elusive. The familiarity and use of terms such as *chakravartin, agamahisi, nagara, rajarsi and Bharatavarsha,* together with the reference to northern political centres, in the same record unmistakably point to the ongoing cultural transactions. Brahmanas were among the recipients of royal munificence.[14] Nevertheless, it may be necessary to mention that Vedic rituals, Brahmanic ideology and brahmanas were still not central to the making

of the strategies of domination. The growing material prosperity, technical skill, cultural contacts and interactions are demonstrable in the archaeological record of the region, and generally speaking the early historic sites on the east coast. That brings us to the emotive question of trade in early historic Orissa. There is precisely little on the organizational aspects of manufacture and trade. The absence of terms related to traders, commercial centres and guilds is too obvious. The sharp contrast with the Deccan in these matters compounds the problem. Orissa being a part of the east coast may have played out its role as some kind of a bridge in coastal trade but beyond that it is difficult to speculate at the moment.[15] On the question of merchants and mercantile activities being intrinsic to early Kalinga, it may be suggested that Kalinga roughly comprised the land up to the Godavari-Krishna deltas and it may be useful to look beyond the frontiers of modern Orissa. For the early medieval times the data is richer within the borders of Orissa, including southern Orissa.

This brief survey does not focus very much on the factual details, but on the patterns of development. What emerges is a society in transition to the early historical period. It seems to have been not a very well organized, but loosely structured, primarily agrarian society, where the contours of inequality were considerably blurred unlike in later societies.

The process of locality or *janapada* formation and the emergence of locality elites continued after Kharavala and his successors.[16] Continued manifestation of the process in the early centuries of the Common era is visible in the dispersed data from the region. The presence of the Mahameghavahanas in the Godavari-Guntur area of Andhra Pradesh, in the mid-second century A.D. is a good example. Whether this was a consequence of Kharavala's campaigns or segmentation of the ruling family is not clear. The Guntupalli inscriptions and the Velpuru inscription[17] record the donation of two *mandapas*, one each by the scribe of Mahameghavahana Sri Sada and the lady attendant Deva of Aira *maharaja* Manasada. It is difficult to determine the relationship between the Mahameghavahanas and this Aira *maharaja*, however it is important that Aira as a family name also occurs in the inscriptions of the Mahameghavahanas at Udayagiri-Khandagiri. The fact that donations were made to what appear to be autochthonous deities by people associated with royalty points to the accrued political profile of the locality. Such developments took place in several pockets of coastal Andhra under discussion, suggesting segmented growth in the socio-political transformation

in the movement towards early historical society. Segmentation, however, did not mean isolation. The distribution of knobbed ware, rouletted ware, and Puri-Kushana coins, among other artifacts, at sites across historical regions/sub-regions on the east coast amply demonstrates the vibrant post Mauryan cultural interactions and change.

Land grants to brahmanas and temples from around the middle of the first millennium A.D. can be situated in the context of local and sub-regional state formation, and other simultaneous developments such as agrarian expansion and social change.[18] Chiefs and kings, and dynasty after dynasty subscribed to brahmanical ideology and dispensed their resources as donations to numerous institutions to ensure the spatial spread and consolidation of their authority. Ruling lineages used the mystique of Vedic rituals, Shastric ideas and Puranic symbolisms to achieve the same ends.[19] The relationship between the king and the brahmana and Brahmanic institutions was crucial to the processes of local state formation and socio-economic transformation, which gradually introduced comparable structures across the region.

South Orissa experienced the simultaneous operation of the above said processes from the fourth-fifth centuries onwards. The spread and entrenchment of Vedic-shastric-epic-puranic ideas can be gleaned from the epigraphic records of the Matharas, Early Eastern Gangas and the Sailodbhavas, among others. Contemporary sculptures on temples also bear testimony to the introduction and circulation of these ideas. The dynastic records refer to the Vedas, Vedangas, Vedic sacrifices, Puranas, puranic deities and stories.[20] Kings are compared with epic heroes, such as Arjuna and Hanumana.[21] There are statements suggesting the destruction of the impurities or stains of the Kali age in the Early Eastern Ganga and Sailodbhava inscriptions, which signal cultural and ideological transformations. The context of the occurrence of the term Kali age, juxtaposing it with the virtue and purity of the king, while unambiguously suggesting that it was a metaphor symbolizing the negation of *dharma* from which the king had to be distanced, also points to the formation of monarchical states within the dominant Brahmanical framework.[22] The narrative panels on the early temples of Bhubaneswar depict scenes drawing liberally from the epics and puranas. Themes relating to the marriage of Shiva and Parvati, Shiva curbing the pride of Ravana, Rama killing the golden deer, the fight between Shiva as Kirata and Arjuna,etc., adorn the panels. The point of interest is that the epic-puranic ideas

and imageries had to be first internalized by the artists so as to subsequently give them a visual manifestation on stone. Evidence such as these at Bhubaneswar or elsewhere in other regions are indubitable pointers to the continuous spread and internalization of new ideas. Names of rural settlements, boundary markers; including natural boundaries, revenue terms, administrative units and officials begin to surface from the dynastic records of the fourth-seventh centuries. The community which was so far elusive begins to become visible. The occurrence of terms such as *kutumbin, grihapati, praja, mahattara* and others denoting inhabitants, in varied rural settlements, indicates the step-wise emergence of a stratified peasantry in the general context of agrarian expansion.[23] Land grants opened up possibilities of new kinds of control over production and labour. The adoption of Sanskrit as the language of politics, allusion to Vedic sacrifices and the use of Dharmashastra verses in the land grant charters signal the coming of a new social formation. Patronage had over time shifted from rock-cut monuments to shastric-puranic ideology, autochthonous deities and temples.[24] Whereas the new ideology tried to transcend narrow boundaries and create larger community identities, rulers in patronizing autochthonous deities with strong social roots tried to appropriate their territoriality and reach out to their natural frontiers. These formative developments laid the foundations for the asymmetrically structured society in the making, as also the subsequent personality of the sub-region.

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# Jhāḍasāhi Copper Plate Charter of Raṇabhañja Pṛthivīkalaśa of Vañjulvaka

***Snigdha Tripathy***

Two sets of copper plate grants belonging to the Bhañja dynasty of Vañjulvaka were unearthed from a homestead plot of land in a village called Jhāḍasāhi under Buguda Police Station of the Ganjam District, sometime during 1994. Both sets were found preserved in an earthen jar and interred in the earth. They were collected through Sri B.K.Satpathy, a retired O.A.S officer from Ganjam District, for the Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar where they are now preserved.

One of the two sets[1] which is being edited here, consists of three copper plates, each measuring 19x10 cms. They are held together by a copper ring of 8 cms in diameter. The two ends of the ring were originally secured under the royal seal which is now found detached from the ring and lost. The first and the third plates have writing on their inner faces only while the second is inscribed on both sides. There are 10 lines of writing on the first plate, the second has 9 lines each on the obverse and the reverse and the third contains 5 lines of writing. There are altogether 33 lines of writing on the three plates. The writing on the plates is in an excellent state of preservation.

The characters employed in the inscription belong to the eastern variety of Northern alphabet of about 10$^{th}$ century A.D and closely resemble those found in the extant copper plate records of the Bhañja kings of Khiñjali-*maṇḍala*, issued from Vañjulvaka, i.e., the area round the present township of Bhanjanagar in the Ganjam District[2].

The language of the inscription is Sanskrit but very much corrupt, especially in the grant portion and written partly in verse and partly in prose. There are several errors of both language and orthography, the latter exhibiting considerable influence of local pronunciation, particularly in the grant portion. The introductory part of the charter containing the invocatory verses in adoration of god Śiva seems to have copied from the copper plate records of the predecessors of the issuer or the reigning king. Interesting from the orthographical point of view is the wrong spelling in words like *nṛtyā* for *nṛttā*

(line 5); *Prithivikalaśa* for *Pṛthivīkalaśa* (line 9); *Māhārāja* for *Mahārāja* (line10); *Jātokarṃya* for *Jātukarṇa* (line 20); *Isvara* for *Īśvara* (line 22); *Maddhusudaṇa* for *Madhusūdana* (line 22) and several such words in the grant portion of the record. The drafting of the charter is similar to that of other extant grants of the Bhañja kings of Vañjulvaka. Besides, there are several omissions and commissions which have been duly noticed in the transcript of the text below. The charter is not dated. But as will be shown in the course of our discussion, the issuer of the grant flourished sometime in the first part of 10th century A.D which can also be gleaned from the palaeography of the record (from the photographs furnished along with the text) as well as the genealogical chart of the family furnished below.

The charter begins with an auspicious symbol for *siddham* which is followed by the two well-known invocatory verses in adoration of the god Śiva in his Bhairava form(vv.1-2) which are usually found in the copper plate grants of the Bhañja rulers issued from Vañjulvaka. A short passage in prose (line 7) then follows, which actually states that the grant was issued from the victorious Vañjulvaka. Then in a stanza (v.3, lines 7-9), the issuer of the charter has been introduced under his secondary or coronation name Pṛthivīkalaśa. Lines 9-13 in a prose passage describe the reigning king who was in good health, as *Paramamāheśvara* (devout worshipper of the god Śiva), *Mahārāja* Raṇabhañjadeva, son of Vidyādharabhañjadeva, grandson of Śilābhañjadeva and the great-grandson of *Mahārāja* Digbhañjadeva ; as a devotee at the feet of his parents and as a frontal mark of the Bhañja family. Lines 13-17 in another prose passage, the king wishes the all-round prosperity to the addressees, such as the residents of the *viṣaya* or the district of Kāmveyāra as well as the officials designated as *Sāmanta*, *Viṣayapati*, *Bhogin* etc. The charter then goes on to inform them in lines 17-23 that the village Nivolā, situated in the division called Kepaṭi-*khaṇḍa* under the said *viṣaya* has been granted as a permanent endowment with libation of water and with specified boundaries, in favour of Īśvara , son of Hyāṅgusāi and grandson of Madhu-*agnihotrin* of the Jātukarṇa *gotra* and Vasiṣṭha *pravara*; and also in favour of a certain Madhusūdana of the Ātreya *gotra*. The grant is stated to have been made for accruing religious merit for the king and his parents. Lines 23-28 contain three of the usual benedictory and imprecatory verses (vv.4-7). Lines 29-32 furnish the names of the persons responsible for the preparation of the document and the execution of the grant. The charter is stated to have been registered with a seal

(*lāñchitam*) by the queen Koṅgodamahādevī. In line 29, there is mention of a Brāhmaṇa minister whose name appears to be Jaivibhava-*bhaṭṭa*, but his role in the execution of the charter has not been specified. Line 30 records the name of Tejaḍika who is designated as *Vāgulika* (or *Vārgulika* of other Bhañja grants which is literally taken to be the "bearer of the king's betel-box"). The same line refers to the name of the writer of the charter as Cāndrakhambha, designated as the *Sandhivigrahin* (minister for war and peace). Line 31 refers to the *Pratihāra*(officer in charge of the palace gate) named Umbaradeva who appears to have taken the charter to the donee's house or executed (*praveśitam*). Lines 31-32 record the name of the engraver of the charter as Kumāracandra, designated as *Akṣaśālin*. This is followed by the word *iti*, the double *daṇḍas* and a letter resembling the letter *tha* of the period in question, each indicating the end of the record. The punctuation mark expressed by the letter *tha* is a typical characteristic feature occurring invariably in the copper plate records of the Ganjam region of the period under discussion and particularly in those of Vidyādharabhañja, father of the issuer of the present grant and his successors.[3] In the same line of the grant it is stated that an amount of 10 *palas* of silver was to be paid (apparently by the donees, annually to the royal authority). A sort of post-script is added in the last line (line 33) referring to the person or persons named Aicadeva Dāmraka who appear to have claimed share of the gift land.

Raṇabhañja Pṛthivīkalaśa, the issuer of the charter in question, whom we may take as the second king to have assumed this name, belonged to the family of rulers, usually known to the scholarly world as the Bhañjas of Khiñjali-*maṇḍala* who ruled the region comprising the present districts of Nayagarh and Ganjam from their capital at Vañjulvaka in the vicinity of the present township of Bhanjanagar in the Ganjam District. He is known for the first time from this charter though several other rulers of this family are already familier to scholars, from their respective epigraphic records so far discovered. The ruling members of this family actually branched out from the earlier line of kings who ruled the kingdom of Khiñjali-*maṇḍala* or Ubhaya-Khiñjali-*maṇḍala*,[4] comprising the present districts of Sonepur, Baud, Phulbani and a portion of the district of Angul with their headquarters at Dhṛtipura, in the vicinity of the Baud township, at present the headquarters of the district of the same name. The three rulers namely, Śilabhañja, Śatrubhañja and Raṇabhañja

are known so far to have ruled from Dhṛtipura from their respective epigraphic records. Raṇabhañja , the first king to have assumed this name seemed to be the last king who ruled from Dhṛtipura and his successors,in fact shifted to the Ganjam region, probably due to Somavaṁśin aggression in the Baud-Sonepur area of their kingdom. It was Neṭṭabhañja I Kalyāṇakalaśa who was the son and successor of Raṇabhañja I, and whose several copper plate grants are now known to have been discovered, seemed to be the founder of the branch which ruled from Vañjulvaka. In fact, the epigraphic records of this king have enabled us to establish the relationship between the two branches of the Bhañja dynasty and reconstruct the genealogy as well as continuity of rule of the Bhañjas, originally from Dhṛtipura in the Sonepur-Baud-Phulbani regions and subsequently from Vañjulvaka in the Nayagarh-Daspalla-Ganjam regions. But Neṭṭabhañja I Kalyāṇakalaśa seemed to have died childless as no record of a son of this ruler is known to have been discovered so far.He is endowed with the humble title of Rājan in almost all his extant copper plate grants. The name of his queen is known to be Māmmā which seems to be a corrupt form of Mahāmāyā.

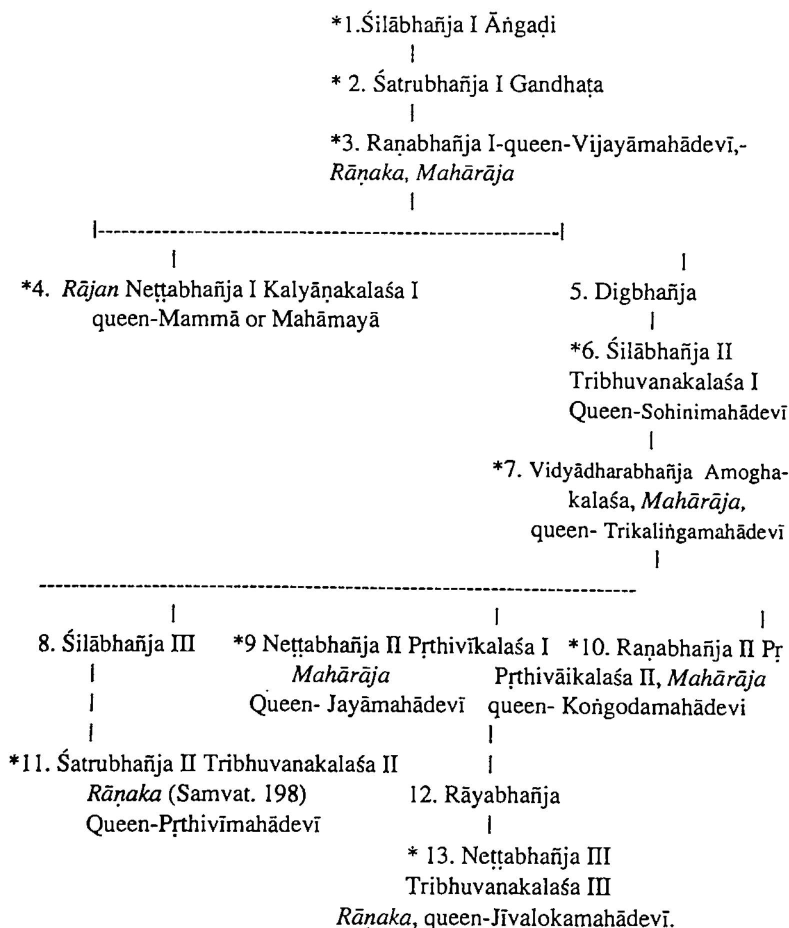
On the other hand a nephew of this king named Śilābhañja who may be taken as the second king of the dynasty to assume this name is known to have issued charters from Vañjulvaka[5]. He assumed the secondary or coronation name of Tribhuvanakalaśa.His queen was Sohinimahādevī.He is described as the son of Digbhañja (often Diśābhañja),grandson of Raṇabhañja and great-grandson of Śatrubhañja in his own records, which would also tend to suggest that Neṭṭabhañja I Kalyāṇakalaśa had a brother named Digbhañja. No record of this brother is, however, discovered so far. It is also difficult to say with certainty if he was the eldest son of Raṇabhañja of Dhṛtipura. But it is quite clear that while the line started by Neṭṭabhañja I was discontinued after his death, the family of Digbhañja continued to rule from Vañjulvaka. Copper plate records of several of his successors indicating the continuity of this dynastic rule have come to light though his own inscription is yet to be discovered. This may induce us to believe that he died a prematured death when his brother Neṭṭabhañja ascended the throne of Vañjulvaka or there had been a struggle for power between the two brothers immediately after the death of their father Raṇabhañja.

The son of Śilābhañja II and grandson of Digbhañja was Vidyādharabhañja Anopamakalaśa(or Anupamakalaśa) whose several copper plate charters are now known to have been discovered[6]. He was the first king of the family to have assumed the royal title of *Mahārāja* and his queen was Trikaliṅgamahādevī. He had at least three sons as known from their respective copper plate records. Śilābhañja ,the third king to assume this name in the family was presumably the eldest son of Vidyādharabhañja who is known only from the epigraphic records of his son and successor named Śatrubhañja II Tribhuvanakalaśa, dated in the Bhauma era 198.[7] As is now well-known, the date furnished in these grants of Śatrubhañja II Tribhuvanakalaśa has in fact determined the beginning of the era (736 A.D.) introduced by the early Bhauma kings of Orissa.

Śilabhañja III Tribhuvanakalaśa seemed to have succeeded to the throne of Vañjulvaka by his two brothers, Neṭṭabhañja II Pṛthvīkalaśa and Raṇabhañja II Pṛthivīkalaśa, the issuer of the present grant, perhaps, one after the other though there was his own son Śatrubhañja II Tribhuvanakalaśa who seemed to have ascended the throne only after the death of these two brothers. The last mentioned king seemed to be a contemporary of the Bhauma- Kara princess Daṇḍimahādevī whose extant copper plate charters are dated in the Bhauma era 180(916 A.D.),183(=919 A.D.), 187(=923 A.D.) and the lattest in the year 190(=926 A.D.).[8] This Bhañja king in fact, acknowledged the Bhauma-Kara supremacy, possibly under Daṇḍimahādevī, as the use of the Bhauma era and his subordinate royal title of *Rāṇaka* would make us believe. His queen was Pṛthivīmahādevī. We have not yet come across any record of his successor to the throne of Vañjulvaka.

While two copper plate grants of Neṭṭabhañja II Pṛthvīkalaśa are already known, the present charter in question introduces Raṇabhañja Pṛthivīkalaśa, presumably his younger brother, for the first time. Neṭṭabhañja Pṛthvīkalaśa is known from his own records to have assumed the royal title of *Mahārāja* .His queen was Jayāmahādevī. He seemed to have succeeded his father before Raṇabhañja II though it cannot be said anything with certainty at the present state.He had a son named Rāyabhañja who is known from the record of his grandson Neṭṭabhañja the third king of this name in the Bhañja family of Vañjulvaka with his secondary name of Tribhuvanakalaśa, and the subordinate royal title of Rāṇaka[9] whose queen was Jīvalokamahādevī. The

genealogical table of the dynasty furnished below would show that after the reign of Raṇabhañja II, the ruling members who ascended the throne of Vañjulvaka were all subordinate kings probably owing allegiance to the Bhauma Karas of the kingdom of Tosali as the feudatory royal titles assumed by them and the use of the Bhauma era in their respective epigraphic records would make us believe. A fresh genealogy of the Bhañja rulers of Khiñjali-*maṇḍala* belonging to both the houses of Dhṛtipura as well as Vañjulvaka, from the available epigraphic records is thus given below. The kings with the mark of austerisks are known to have issued copper plate grants :-



The present charter of Raṇabhañja II refers to his queen's name as Koṅgodamahādevī who was associated with the execution of the grant and stated to have registered the charter with the royal seal. It is to be noted that all the ruling members issuing grants from Vañjulvaka since the time of Neṭṭabhañja I Kalyāṇakalaśa who was probably the founder of this branch of the dynasty of Khiñjali-*maṇḍala*, refer to their respective queens, presumably the chief queens, who were usually entrusted with affixing or authenticating the grant with the royal seal. The genealogical table furnished above would reveal that the ruling members of the Dhṛtipura branch of the dynasty have rarely mentioned the name of their respective queens in the copper plate grants issued by them with the exception of one of the grants of Raṇabhañja I dated in his 22nd regnal year.[10] This grant was, in fact, made by his queen Vijyā (Vijayā)mahādevī[11] on behalf of her husband in favour of the god Śiva enshrined in the temple named after her as Vijayeśvara.

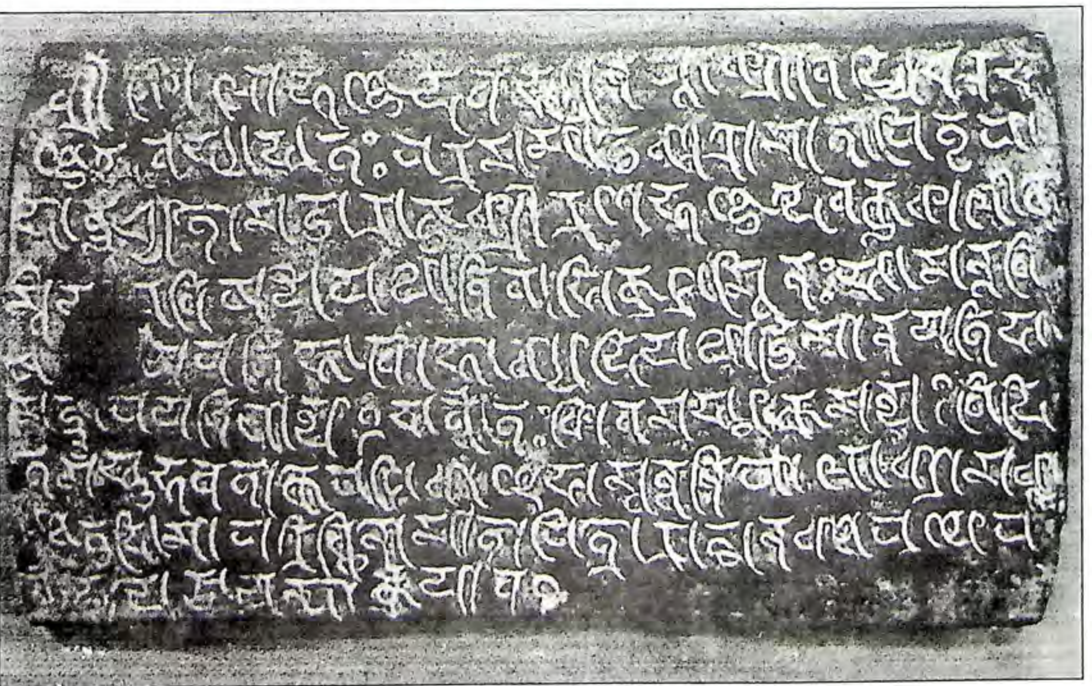
The name of the royal officers associated with the execution of the present charter are already known from the extant grants of Vidyādharabhañja, father of the issuer. The minister for war and peace (*Sandhivigrahin*) and the writer of the grant named Cāndrakhambha also served Vidyādharabhañja in the same capacity. A minister named śri-Khambha or śrī-Stambha is known to have served as the writer under Śilābhañja II Tribhuvanakalaśa as well as his son Vidyādharabhañja. A Brāhmaṇa named *Bhaṭṭa* Stambhadeva who became a minister under Śilābhañja II and Vidyādharabhañja ,seems to be originally one of the beneficiaries during the reign of Neṭṭabhañja I Kalyāṇakalaśa[12]. He also served as *dūtaka* or the chief executor of one of the grants of Śilābhañja II.[13]

The charter under discussion is not dated. It may be noted in this context that majority of the copper plate grants of the ruling members of this branch of the dynasty do not furnish the date mainly their respective regnal year in the proper manner and in many cases, the writer or the engraver is noticed to have omitted the year of reign when it was issued, after the word *samvat*. In some copper plate charters of Neṭṭabhañja I Kalyāṇakalaśa, it is noticed, after the word *samvat*, the lunar day is given both in word as well as in numerical figures.[14] In some grants of the family, the final *t* in the word *samvat* has been wrongly read by previous scholars as representing a numerical figure indicating the regnal year of the issuer of the charter.[15] In some cases, the letter

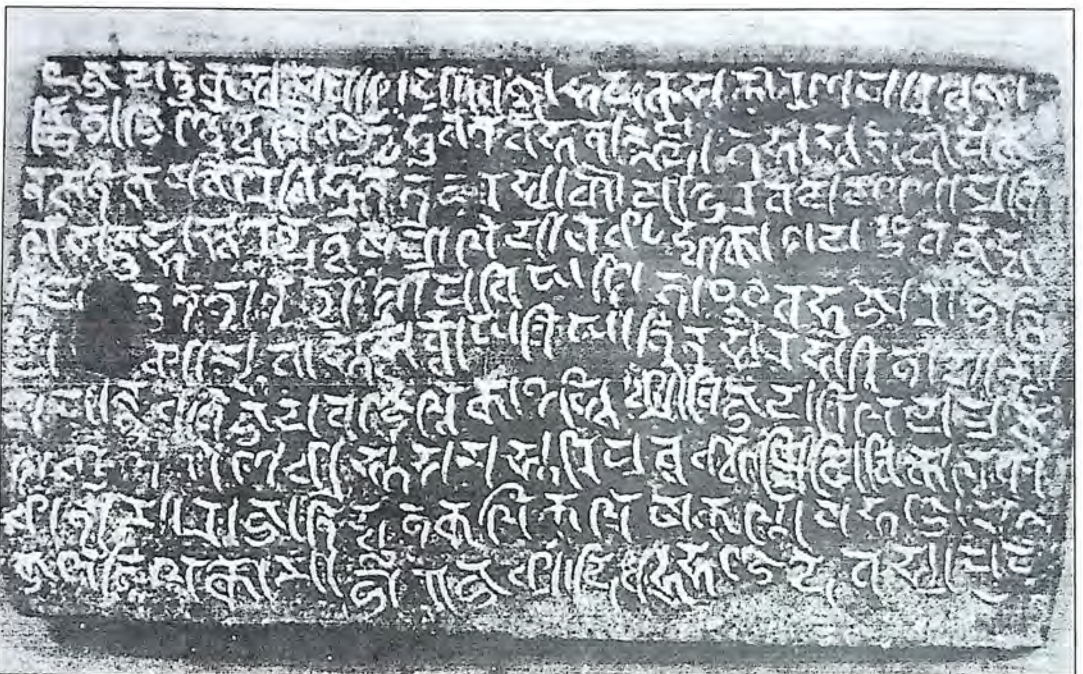
*tha* indicating the full-stop and the end of the record as found in the grants of Vidyādharabhañja and in the present one in question, in fact confused the previous scholars who believed it be a numerical symbol representing the date of the record. Sometimes, a post-script is added after the letter *tha* which is followed by double *daṇḍas* (also as given in the grant in question)for punctuation and then a symbol for *siddham* intended apparently to indicate the commencement of another section of the charter. But these two signs furnished in some records together have often been believed to be numerical figures representing the date of the charter.[16] A few latter ruling members of the family are, however, known to have used the era introduced by the Bhauma-Kara dynasty of Orissa, in their respective copper plate records. It is, in fact, the two charters of *Rāṇaka* Śatrubhañja II Tribhuvanakalaśa , son of Śilābhañja III and grandson of Vidyādharabhañja, dated in the Bhauma year 198 (=934 A.D), have practically determined the beginning of the Bhauma era.

The charter records at the end of line 32 that 10 *palas* of silver was to be paid apparently by the two donees to the royal authority. But it does not specify whether the amount was to be paid annually or the landed property was gifted away by the king by taking a lumpsome amount of 10 *palas* from the donees. The weight of valuable metals like gold and silver was usually measured according to the *pala* weight standard as laid down in the ancient Indian *Smṛti* texts and which was also adopted in the Orissan kingdoms during early mediaeval times[17]. One *pala* of siver was generally regarded as equal 320 *ratis* (black and red seeds called *raktikās* or *ratis* ) and 10 *palas* of this metal was thus equal to 3200 *ratis* or 40 *tolas* which cannot be taken as a small amount fixed for annual rent of the landed property during the period in question.

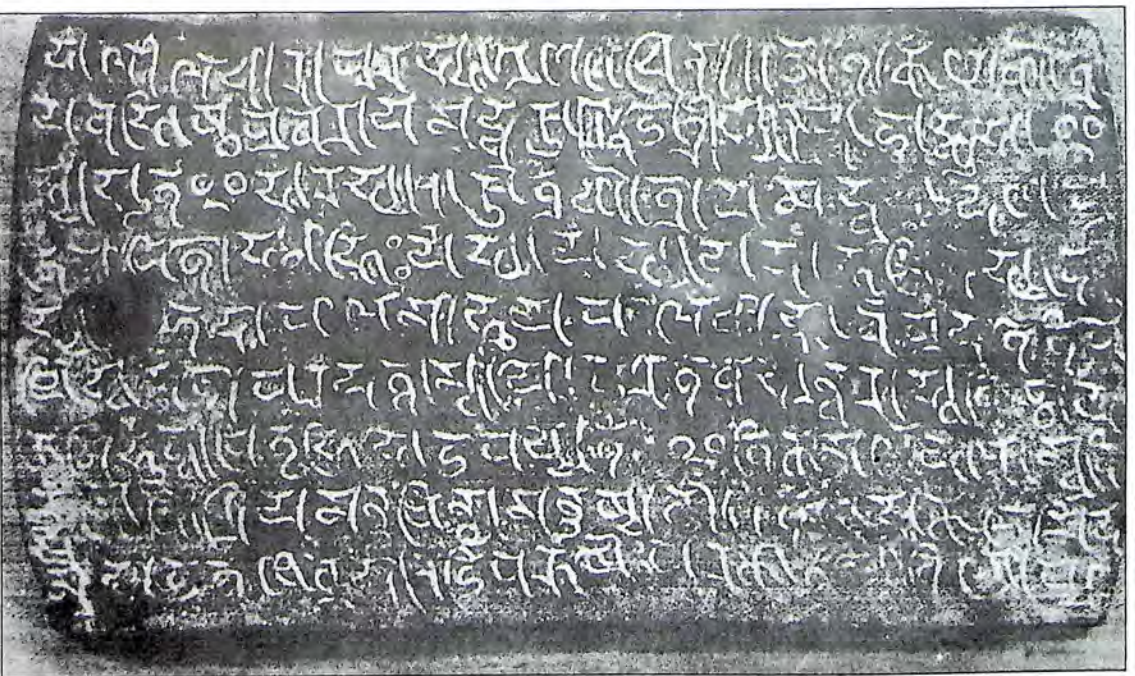
Of the geographical names mentioned in the copper plate grant under discussion, Vañjulvaka, the capital of the branch of the Bhañja dynasty of Khiñjali-*maṇḍala* to which the issuer of the charter belonged, is now believed to be the area round the present township of Bhanjanagar in the Ganjam District. Although the gift village Nivolā is yet to be identified, the *khaṇḍa* or the division called Kepaṭi-*khaṇḍa* of the *viṣaya* or district of Kāmveyāra in which, it (the gift village) was situated, may be the same as the modern Kupaṭi, the chief locality after which the *khaṇḍa* was so named, and is now located under Tarasingi Police Station and on the border of the Bhanjanagar P.S. This



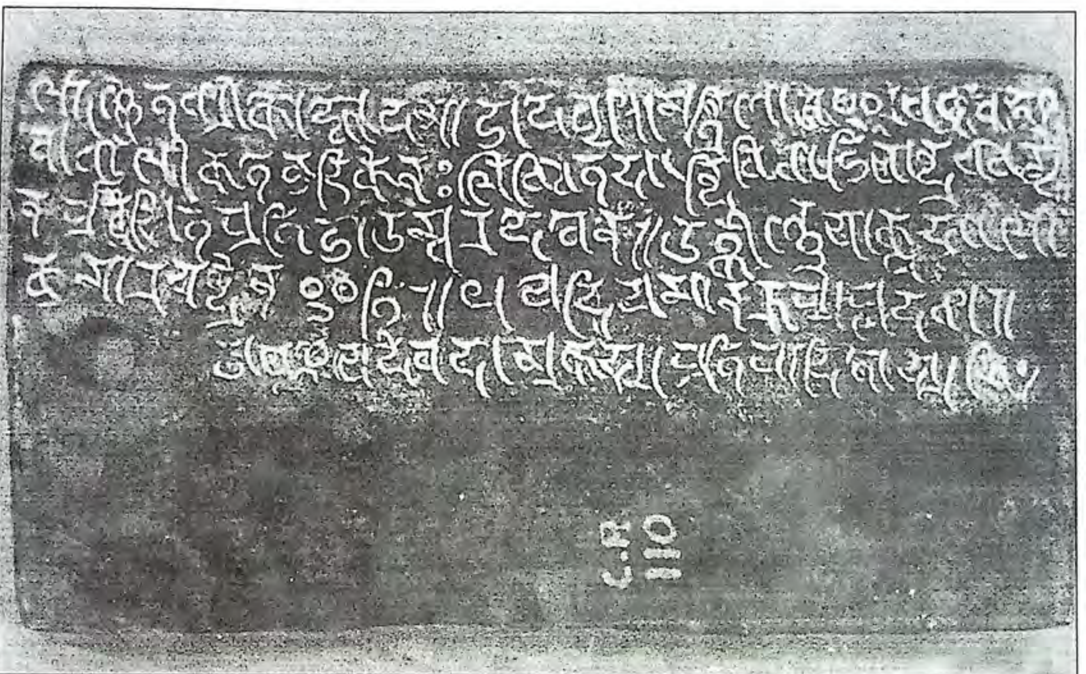
Jhāḍasāhi C.P. of Raṇabhañja II Pṛthivikalaśa
Second Plate : First side



Jhāḍasāhi C.P. of Raṇabhañja II Pṛthīvikalaśa
First Plate : Inner side



Jhāḍasāhi C.P. of Raṇabhañja II Pṛthivikalaśa
Second Plate : Second side



Jhāḍasāhi C.P. of Raṇabhañja II Pṛthivikalaśa
Third Plate : Inner side

division of the *viṣaya* of Kāmveyāra is also found mentioned along with the gift village granted by Neṭṭabhañja I Kalyāṇakalaśa in his unpublished charter discovered along with the present one. The *viṣaya* often found spelt as Komviyāra or Kāmverāla, is already known from the Russelkonda(or Banatumba) charter of Neṭṭabhañja of Drumarāja-*kula*.[18] The locality of Banatumba whence this grant was discovered is situated in the Bhanjanagar P.S.and contiguous to Kupaṭi, on the right bank of the river called Baḍanadī which was known as Mahānadī in ancient times.[19] The *viṣaya* of Kāmveyāra, though not yet identified, it comprised evidently, the area round Kupaṭi and a portion of the Bhañjanagar P.S.

The text of the charter is given below :-

**Text[20]**

***First Plate; Inner Side***

1. Siddham[|*][21] Jayatu kusumavā(bā)ṇa- prā[ṇa*]- vikṣobha- dakṣa[ṁ*] sva-kī(ki)raṇa—pariveśo(śa-au)-

2. ṛjjitya- ji(jī)rṇṇ-endu-lekhaṁ(kham)[|*] tṛ(tri)bhuvanavabha(bhava)n-āntar-dyota-bhāsvat-pradīpaṁ ka-

3. naka-nikaṣa-go(gau)ra[ṁ*] vibhru-netra[ṁ*] harasya[||*1] Śo(Śe)ṣ-āher=iva ye phaṇā[ḥ*] pravi-

4. lasantu(nty)=udbhāsvar=endu-tviṣa[ḥ*] prāleyāca[la*]-śṛṅga-koṭṭa(ṭa)ya iva tvaṅga-

5. nti ye=tu(tyu)n(nna)tāḥ [|*] nṛtyā(tt-ā)ṭṭo(ṭa)pa-vighaṭṭitā iva bhujā rājanti

6. ye śāmbhavās=te sarvv-āgha-vighātina[ḥ*] sura-sarit[t*]oy=ormma-

7. ya[ḥ*] pāntu va[ḥ*|| 2] vijaya-Vā(Va)ñjulvakāt[|*] [A*]sti śrī-vijaya-nilaya[ḥ*] praka-

8. ṭa-guṇa-gaṇa[22]-grasta-samasta-ripu-vu(va)rgga[ḥ*|] Pri(Pṛ)thivi(vī)kalaśa-

9. śa[23]-nāmā rājā nirddhu(nirdhū)ta-kali-kaluṣa[ḥ*|| 3] kalmaṣa[24] Bhañj-āmala-

10. kula-tilako(kaḥ) Mā(Ma)hārāja-śrī-Digbhabhañjadevasya[25]prapā(pau)[traḥ*]

***Second Plate; First Side***

11. śrī-Śilābhañjadevasya naptā śrī-Vidyādharabha-

12. ñjadevasya sutaḥ parama-māheśvaro mātā-pitṛ-pā-

13. d-ānudhyāto Mahārāja-śrī-Raṇabhañjadeva[ḥ*] kuśalī Kā-

14. mveyāra-viṣaye yathā-nivāsi-kuṭumvi(mbi)naḥ sāmanta-vi-

15. ṣayapati-bhogi-bhogy-ādi-[janapadān*] yath-ārhi(ārhaṁ) mānayati sā(sa)-

16. ma(mā)jñāpayati c=ānyat sarvvā(vva)taḥ śivam=asmākam=anyat vidi-

17. tam=astu bhavatā(tām)[|*] Kepaṭkhaṇḍa-samvandha[26] Nivolā-grāmaś=ca-

18. ś=ca[27] tu[ḥ*]si(śī)mā-paricchino(nnaḥ) mātā-pitror=ātmanaś=ca puṇyāpa[28]-

19. vṛddhaye a(ā)-candr-ārkka[29] yāvat[30]

***Second Plate; Second Side***

20. salī(li)la-dhārā-pura[ḥ*]ssa(sa)reṇa vidhinā ||[31] Jātokarṇya-gotrā-

21. ya[32] Vasiṣṭha-pravarāya Maddhu(dhu)-agnihotrisya[33] naptā(tre) Hyāṅgusāi-

22. sya[34] suta(tāya) Isvarasya[35] Atri(Ātreya)-gotrāya Maddhusudaṇa[36] pra-

23. tipādito='smābhiḥ [|*] rya(ya)sya yasya yadā bhu(bhū)mi[ḥ*] tasya ta-

24. sya tadā phala(lam)[||*4][37] Mā bhūya(d)=aphala-śaṅkā va[ḥ*] pradatyeti pā-

25. rthi[38] [|*] Sva-datyā[39] para-dattāmvā(ttāṁ vā) yo hareta vasundharā(rām)[|*] sa viṣṭhāyā[ṁ*]

26. kṛmir=bhu(r=bhū)tvā pitṛbhi[ḥ*] saha pacyatiḥ(te)[||*6] Iti kamala-dal-āmvu(mbu)-vin-

27. ndu lolā[ṁ*] śriyam=anucintya manuṣya-jīvitañ=ca [|*] sakala=idam=

28. udāhṛtañ=ca vuddhā(buddhvā) na hi puruṣaiḥ para-kīrttayo vilopyā[ḥ*][ ||*7]

***Third Plate; Inner Side***

**29.** lāñchita[ṁ*] śrī-Koṅgoda-mā(ma)hādevyā ॥ mantriṇā Jai (?)[40]vibhava-bhaṭṭa

**30.** vārgulika- Tejaḍikenaḥ[41] likhita[ṁ*] sandhivigrahi- Cāndrakhambhe-

**31.** na pravesi(śi)ta[ṁ*]-Umva(mba)rada(de)vena ॥ utkīrṇṇa[ñ=]c-ākṣasā(śā)lī(li)-

**32.** Kumāracandrena iti ॥ tha[42] [Ya*]tha(ā) di(dī)yamāna ru(rū)pya pla[43] daśa ॥

**33.** Aicadeva Dāmrakasya[44] pratipādito='sma(smā)bhiḥ ।

**References**

1 The other set discovered along with this, belongs to Neṭṭabhañja I Kalyāṇakalaśa I whose several copper plate grants are already known to have been published; see, S.Tripathy, *Inscriptions of Orissa* (*IO* hereafter), Vol.VI, (1974), pp.166 ff; *Orissa Historical Research Journal* (*OHRJ* hereafter), Vol.XXXVIII, pp.214 ff & plate.

2 For the inscriptions of the Bhañjas of Vañjulvaka, see, S.Tripathy, *IO*,Vol.VI,pp.162-85ff; *Utkala Pradīpa*(Journal of the Dept.of Ancient Indian History & Archaeology, Utkal University),Vol.IV,(2002),pp.1 ff & plate; *OHRJ*,Vol.XXXVIII,pp.214 ff.& plate.etc.

3 Cf., *Epigraphia Indica* (*EI* onwards),Vol.XVIII,pp.296ff & plate; Vol.XXXVII,pp.266ff & plate, etc.

4 The river Mahānadī actually divided the kingdom of Khiñjali-*maṇḍala* near Baud into two divisions, northern and southern Khiñjalis for which it was so named.

5 *EI*, Vol.XXVIII,pp.272ff &plate; *Utkala Pradīpa*,Vol.IV,pp.1-12ff & plate. This second charter of the king is now preserved in the Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar. Its issuer is referred to in this record as the great-grandson of Śatrubhañja I and grandson of Raṇabhañja I who ruled from Dhṛtipura in the Baud-Phulbani region.

6 For the two grants of this king, see, S.Tripathy, *IO*, Vol.VI,pp.132-43 ff. There is an unpublished copper plate charter of the same king, discovered from Niladripur in the Nayagarh District and now preserved in the Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar. The present

writer had the occasion to decipher the inscription which is awaiting publication. The earlier scholars have read the secondary or coronation name of this king from his two published charters as Amoghakalaśa. But a detailed examination of these records as well as of the above said unpublished one has revealed cleaely the name as Anopamakalaśa, may be corrected as Anupamakalaśa. Kielhorn in the "Orissa Plates of Vidyādharabhañja",(*EI*,Vol.IX,pp.271ff & plate) has doubtfully read the name as Dharmmakalaśa(?) due to the palimpsest nature(traces of earlier engravings) of the plates.

7 S. Tripathy, *IO*,Vol.VI,pp.186-95 ff.

8 For the copper plate charters of this Bhauma queen, rather an unmarried princess, see, S.Tripathy, *IO*, Vol.II,(1999),pp.173-197 ff. Her lattest known charter dated in the Bhauma year 190 has been recently discovered from a village called Pāṭaliṅgā under Athgarh Tahsil in the Cuttack District The present writer had the occasion to decipher it from the original. It is at present in the possession of its finder, a resident of the said village.

9 S. Tripathy, op.cit.,pp.196-201.

10 *Ibid*, pp.77ff; The regnal year mentioned in this charter has been doubtfully read.

11 The name of the queen, though previously taken to be Vidyā, it seems to be more appropriate to read it as Vijyā for Vijayā as there seems to be South Indian accent in the spelling of the name, cf., Vizianagaram for Vijayanagaram.

12 *EI*,Vol.XXIV,pp.172; S.Tripathy,op.cit,pp.164-66ff.

13 S. Tripathy, op.cit.,pp.132-38ff.; *EI*,Vol.XXVIII,pp.271ff.

14 *OHRJ*,Vol.XXXVII,pp.216-36 and plate. In his unpublished grant which was discovered along with the present charter,the lunar day and the year of reign are given as 3 both in word as well as in numerical figure in a confused manner as *samvat śu di tṛtīya, aṅken-āpi* 3 giving us the impression that the numbers indicate only the lunar day.

15 Cf., the grant of Śilābhañja II Tribhuvanakalaśa in *EI* ,Vol.XXVIII,pp.271-78ff and plate.

16 Cf., *EI*, Vol.XXXVII,pp.266ff & plate.

17 S.Tripathy, *Early & Medieval Coins & Currency System of Orissa*,(Calcutta, 1986),pp. 161, 178 etc.

18 *EI*,Vol.XXVIII,pp.258-63 and plate. He is known to be an earlier king of the Ganjam region who ruled during about 8th century A.D. His relationship with the Bhañja rulers of Vañjulvaka who ruled the same region in the subsequent period of history has not yet been established, though there flourished several Neṭṭabhañjas in the family.

19 For this ancient river, see, S.Tripathy, *IO*,Vol.I,p.6.

20 From the original and photographs.

21 Expressed by a symbol.

22 The word *gaṇa* may be omitted for the sake of the metre.

23 This letter is superfluous.

24 This word is redundant though it is found in other charters of the dynasty.

25 Read *Digbhañjadevasya*

26 Read *sambaddhaḥ.*

27 This letter is redundant.

28 Read *puṇy-ābhi-*

29 The second *ka* of *rkka* is faintly visible.

30 The line abruptly ends here and about half of the line at the right is left blank due to unknown reason.

31 The punctuation is superfluous.

32 Read *Jātukarṇasa gotrāya.*

33 Read *-agnihotriṇaḥ*

34 Read *Hyāṅgusāi-.*

35 Read *Īśvarāya*

36 Read *Madhusūdanāya.*

37 The first part of the stanza has been omitted which is usually found in other copper plate records of the dynasty as, *Bahubhir=vasudhā dattā rājabhiḥ Sagar-ādibhiḥ* I

38 Read *para-datt=eti pārthivāḥ* I The second part of the stanza is omitted which should be read as *sva-dattāt=phalam=ānantyaṁ para-datt-ānupālane* II [5*]

39 Read *sva-dattāṁ*

40 The expression seems to denote the first part of the name of the minister Vibhava-*bhaṭṭa*.

41 Omit the sign of *visarga*.

42 This type of punctuation mark,i.e., a letter resembling *tha* of the period in question, indicating full-stop or the end of the record, frequently occurs in the copper plate grants of Vidyādharabhañja, father of the issuer of the present grant; cf., *EI*, Vol. XVIII,pp.276 ff and plate.

43 This is the abbreviation for *pala*, indicating the unit of metallic weight; one *pala* of silver was regarded as equal to 320 *ratis* (black and red seeds).

44 The name may also be read as *Dāmukāya* as the medial sign for *u* in this charter very often resembles the subscript *r* ; cf., *kumāra* in line 32.

# Temples of the Jagamanda Hill and its Archaeological Remains

***Shishir Kumar Panda***

Though much has been written on the temples of coastal Orissa and Western Orissa, little attention has been given to bring to light the temples of South Orissa in general and Rayagada district in particular. The temples of the Jagamanda hill is a neglected field of study. No proper archeological survey has been made on this hill except depiction of a couple of temples. Jagamanda hill is a rocky mound nearly hundred feet in height with a flat platform covering a large area (see Plate-I). It is located at Padmapur at a distance of 13 miles north of Gunupur, the sub-divisional headquarters of newly formed Rayagada district of South Orissa. The hill stands on the plain land surrounded by agricultural fields with natural scenic beauty. The river Vamsadhara flows five-kilometers away from this hill. It is on a strategic place, can be seen from the distant and not covered by any other hills nearby. It is a famous Saivite centre, existed at present four Siva temples such as Nilakanthesvara, Mallikesvara, Padukeswar and Dhavalesvara. But people say originally there were five temples. At present the fifth temple Manikesvara do not exist. Besides the temples, the hill contains other archaeological remains like an inscription in the Nilakanthesvara temple, natural caves, a perennial natural pond and other ruined monuments. In this paper, an attempt has been make to survey the temples and the rich archaeological remains of the hill and to bring that light for further study. This is a preliminary report based on field study which requires archaeological excavation to get a complete picture.

## Nilakanthesvara temple

Among the four temples, the Nilakanthesvara temple is the most unique and earliest temple (see, Plate-II). It stands on the plain stone platform at the top of the hill. It is a single chambered temple made of seven blocks of stones. The stone blocks are arranged one over another to give it a temple structure without the use of lime or any other material. It is built in *pidha* style on a square ground plan. The temple can be divided vertically into three parts such as *bada, gandi* and *mastaka*. Further, the *bada* is divided into *prabhaga* and *jangha.* The *prabhaga* having two mouldings of *khura* variety. The temple is faced to east and the single door is flanked by plain jambs. There are two *dvarapalas* on either side of the entrance door. The roof is of two tiered

pyramidial style. The upper portion of the roof is a flat single stone. It seems that originally there was no *beki* and *amalakasila*, but at present, the local people have constructed a cement *beki* and *amalakasila* over the roof which does not fit to the original plan of the stone temple.

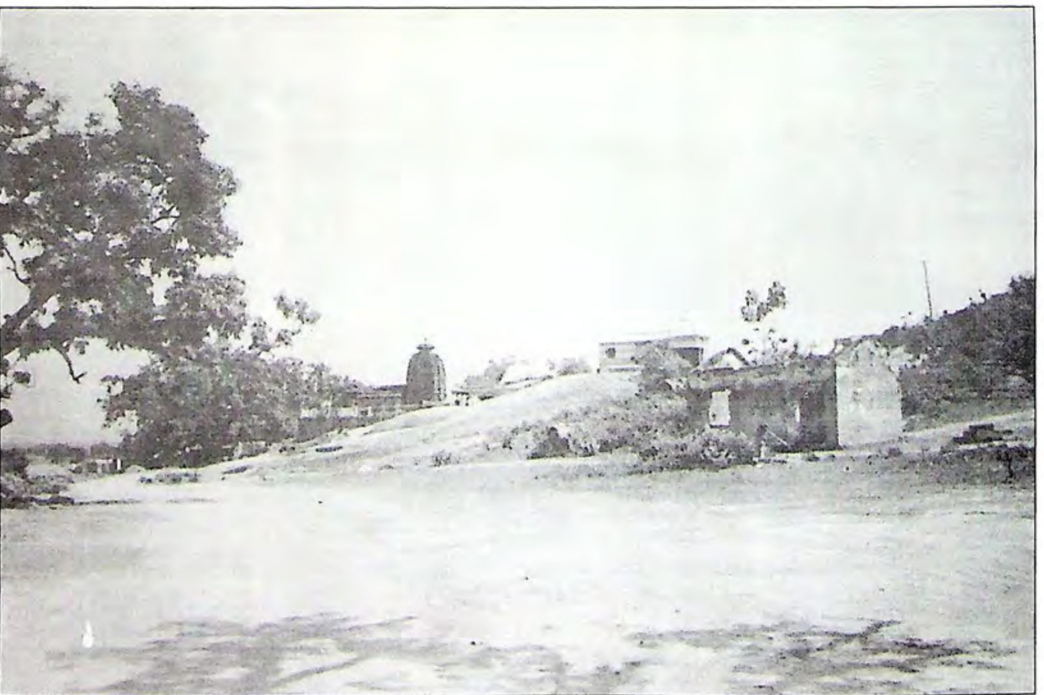
On the eastern wall, left side of the entrance door, there is a two line inscription which mentions the name of three Buddhist *acharyas* such as Chandralekha, Bhaddhakhan and Dharmakirtti which is a puzzle among the historians. This led the scholar like S.N. Rajguru[1] and N.K. Sahu[2] to identify Jagamanda hill as a Buddhist Centre and vihar of the famous Buddhist philosopher Dharmakirtti. On the basis of the paleography, N.K. Sahu[3] has dated the inscription to the 7th century A.D.

The present temple has similarity with the Bhima temple on the Mahendragiri mountain which is made of seven blocks of stones.[4] It has a square sanctum, squat sikhara and flat roof. This temple is identified with the Gokarnesvara temple built by the Early Gangas of Kalinga. So on the basis of a comparative study, taking into account the architectural style, the Nilakanthesvara temple can be dated to sixth century A.D. This temple can be compared to some extent with the three sub-shrines standing on the compound of Madhukesvara temple at Mukhalingam in the Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh.[5]

**Mallikesvara Temple**

The Mallikesvara temple is located at the foot of the Jagamanda hill (see, Plate-III and IV). The temple was in ruins and at present the temple is renovated completely. The temple is *rekha* type with a *mukhasala or jagamohana*. The *mukhasala* is a rectangular, flat roofed and pillared type. The side walls of the *jagamohana* represent three mouldings. There is a joint between the main shrine and the *jagamohana*. The sculptural decorations consists of an image of Siva Ekapapda with *urdha linga* and *Sapta Matrika* slabs.

The walls of the main temple shrine are of *triratha* type with a central *parsva devata* niche and barrel vaulted side niches. These niches are flanked by flat and undecorated pilasters. The decorative *Vajramastaka* of the front *raha* and the dancing Siva above the shrine doorway is covered by the *jagamohana* roof. The *parsvadevatas* are Ganesa with his mouse, Kartikeya with peacock and Mahisimardhini Durga.



View of the Jagamanda Hill



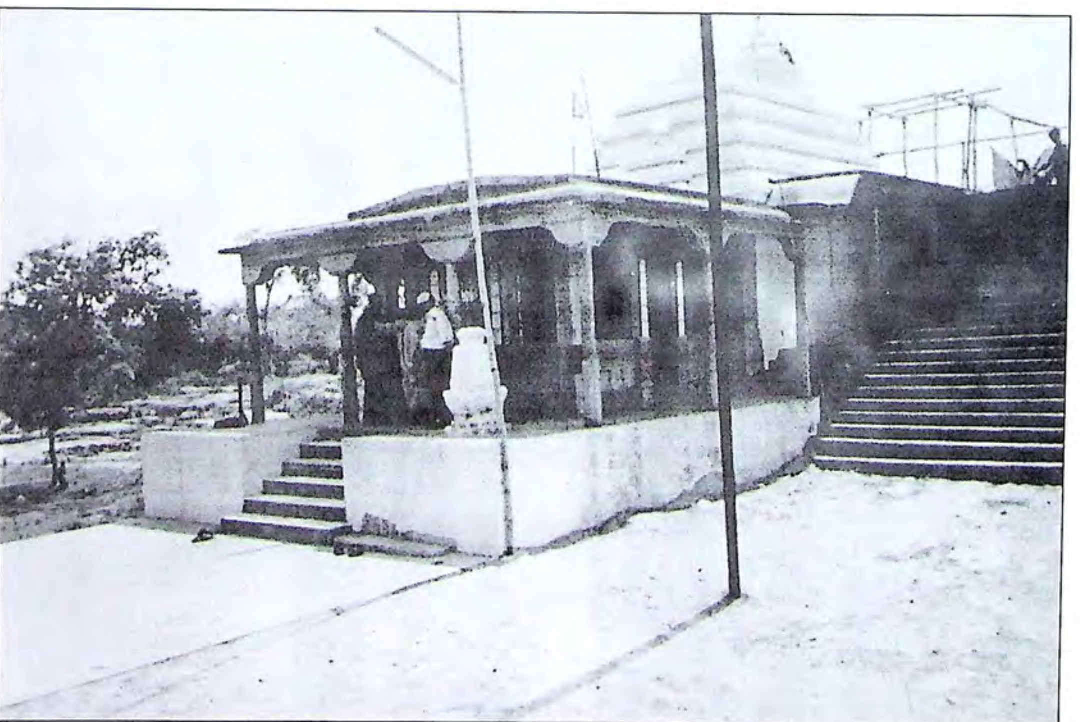
Nilakantheswar temple on Jagamanda Hill
(back view)



Mallikeswar temple (side view) on Jagamanda Hill



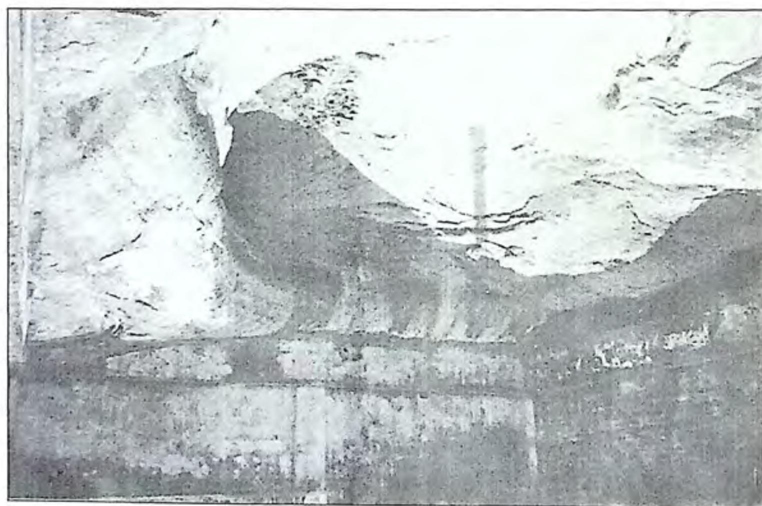
Mallikeswara temple on Jagamanda Hill



Dhavaleswar temple (renovated) on the Jagamanda Hill



Pudukeswar temple on Jagamanda Hill



Natural water resources on the Jagamanda Hill near to Nilakantheswar temple

The *Sikhara* which is a *pancharatha* type has levels of three sections each. The *anurathas* of the *sikhara* represent a series of *chaitya* arches on the outer faces. The temple is approached by wide long steps from the ground level to the *jagamohan* which is nearer to the foot of the mound. This temple has some similarities with the twin temple of Gandhardi of Boudh district.

**Dhavalesvara Temple**

The Dhavalesvara temple is located to the left side of the Mallikesvara temple. This temple is completely renovated with modern structures (see, Plate-V). The main shrine is a *pidha* type of temple consisted by five tiers or *pidhas*. It has a sikhara and the temple is devoid of any sculptural decorations. The newly built porch is a flat roofed open *mukhasala* with pillars built on a raised platform. It is approached by five steps.

**Pudukesvara Temple**

The Pudukesvara temple is located at a distance of one kilometer from Jagamanda hill stands on a plain land. The temple is a *pidha* type consisted of a *jagamohana* and main shrine (see, Plate-VI). There is a small entrance to the temple from the east. There are two sikharas on the *jagamohana* and main shrine. This temple is also completely renovated with cement plaster so the original stone structure is completely covered. It is devoid of any sculptural decorations.

At present it is difficult to identify the Manikesvara temple. People of the locality also not aware of the exact location of this temple. Perhaps, this temple can be identified with another shrine at a distance of ten yards from the Nilakanthesvara temple. In this temple there is no idol and the scholars say it was a resting place for the Buddhist monks. But since the shrine has a *sikhara* it can not be a resting place of the Buddhist monks.

**The Cave**

Behind the Nilakanthesvara temple, at a distance of 12 feet, there is a tunnel leading to a spacious cave. People say that this cave was the abode and resting place of the Buddhist monks. Also, there is a legend which says that through this tunnel, which was linked with a river, the God Kitung used to come to the Jagamanda hill to make the images of lord Jagannath. God Kitung had vowed to complete the image of lord Jagannath before dawn but he could not complete the image. So he took the half made image and left the place through the tunnel which was later on installed at Jagannath temple at Puri. In this way, the legend has kept alive the tribal origin of the Jagannath cult in the mind of the people of the tribal heart land of Orissa upto the recent time.

### The Water Reservoir

Nearer to the Nilakanthesvara temple, on the top of the hill, to the left there is a perennial water reservoir (see, Plate-VII). People regard this as a holy pond, as throughout the year water remains there. This is the only water source of the hill which might have supplied water to the temples in the earlier days.

### Alleged Buddhist affiliation of Jagamanda hill

On the basis of the two line inscription of the Nilakanthesvara temple, scholars have identified Jagamanda hill as a Buddhist centre and Vihara. The inscription records three persons such as Chandralekha, Bhaddhakhan and Dharmakirtti. S.N. Rajaguru[6] has identified them to be three Buddhist Acharyas. The main basis of identification is definitely Dharmakirtti. Since Dharmakirtti was a well known Buddhist scholar and philosopher of the 7th century A.D., scholar have inclined to identify with him. On the other hand, they have remained silent regarding the identification of two other so called Buddhist acharyas Chandralekha and Buddhakhan. So far, we do not know anything regarding these two persons. Also, the Buddhist sources are silent about them. So it is not tenable to identify them as Buddhist archaryas. Their identification is also not supported by any other sources. Only on the basis of the similarity of the name Dharmakirtti, we can not identify them as Buddhists and the place to be a Buddhist Vihar which is against the norm of historical methodology. Further, we do not find any Buddhist antiquities or remains of a Vihara. Generally Buddhist viharas in Orissa had larger establishments which we find in Ratnagiri, Lalitagiri, Udayagiri and recently excavated Langudi hills. Comparatively, we do not find any such monastic habitation remains at Jagamanda hill. It is a well known fact that so far, we have not found any Buddhist antiquities in undivided Koraput district including Rayagada where as there are ample Jain remains. It seems that Buddhism did not penetrate to this remote tribal area of South Orissa where as Jainism did. So under such circumstance it is difficult to identify Jagamanda as a Buddhist centre. There is no doubt that it was a famous Saiva centre as it is now.

The Early Gangas of Kalinga were the followers of Saivism which was very popular in this region from 6th century A.D. After their occupation of Mahendra region, they enshrined their family God Gokarnesvara and erected a temple on the top of the mountain. The Early Gangas claimed to be the overlord of Trikalinga territory which constituted the territory of present Rayagada and Koraput districts. It seems that they have constructed the Nilakanthesvara temple on the model of Gokarnesvara temple of Mahendragiri on the Jagamanda hill for the spread of Saivism in this tribal area.

**The present scenario**

At present the Jagamanda hill has lost its antiquarian importance and much damage has been made to the hill. People say that before twenty years, one can see the entire mound from a distance. But now the mound has been encroached by the people. A number of buildings both private and Government have been constructed on the mound thus causing much vandalism to this place. Recently, the Padmapur College has been constructed on the ground level of the mound. Stones have been taken away for constructions purposes. Though the temples of the Jagamanda hill are declared as protected monuments by the Archaeological department of the Government of Orissa, proper care has not been taken to preserve them. Local people without realizing the antiquarian value have constructed a concrete enclosure porch with iron grills in front of the Nilakanthesvara temple which has completely blocked its front view. One can only get a complete view of the temple from the backside. A number of modern shrines are also constructed near to this temple. Similarly, the Dhavalesvara temple has been constructed newly on the ruins. Such type of vandalism should be stopped and local people should be educated regarding their archaeological value. The entire Jagamanda hill should be protected from further destruction. This place should be developed as an ideal tourist centre of South Orissa, otherwise, we will loose one of the most important archaeological wealth of Orissa for the posterity.

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# The Later Nalas of Bhimapura

***Chandrabhanu Patel***

The illustrious Nalas ruled over a vast tract of land in the upper Mahanadi valley (including its tributaries) unifying the different disjointed principalities and diffusing the indelible imprints of the cultural traits far and wide. Roughly, the Nala rule stood the test of time from the 4th century A.D. down to the 10th century A.D. with a strange career of vicissitude. In course of their centuries of political history, they confronted many an adversary and still survived for a long period shifting their political centres to different parts of their far-flung territory contributing enormously to the cultural matrix of ancient North-West & South-East regions of present Orissa.

The identification of the original homeland of the Nalas has been a matter of great controversy. However, our research has divulged that the present undivided Koraput, Kalahandi, Ganjam and Bastar regions constitute the original home-land of the Nalas, In fact, this region is a land of hoary antiquity and was known by several names such as Daruvana, Mahavana, Dandakaranya, Atavika Kingdom, Vidhyadhardhivasa, Nisadha, Kantara, Kosala, Mahakosala, Daksina Kosala and Trikalinga etc. and on the eve of the rise of the Nalas, this part was mostly known by Nisadha and Kantara. Subsequently, they expanded their territory over the entire traditional South Kosala region (i.e. Western Orissa and Chhattisgarh region of M.P.). Situated at the centre of the ancient route between South and North India, this area althrough remains an important cultural junction in the South eastern part of central India. Under the benign rule of the Nalas the region witnessed unprecedented socio-political and cultural efflorescence contributing immensely to the Indian civilization.

With the disintegration of the mighty Kusana and Satavahana empire, the South Kosala region was parcelled out into petty principalities in the 3rd century A.D. North India, Deccan and the Kalinga regions were also in utter political confusion by that time. The Guptas rose and consolidated their position in north India. At this cataclysmic juncture, the Vakatakas rose in the upper Deccan region and the Nalas emerged in the ancient Nisadha and Kantara territory in the South East trans-Vindhyan region. In the struggle for the imperial supremacy, the Guptas were crowned with spectacular success and Samudragupta even made a dashing raid into the South. The heroic march of the Gupta monarch into the Dakshinapatha was a gigantic military expedition without permanent subjugation. No doubt, the Nala king Vyaghraraja admitted his defeat. But as soon as Samudragupta retreated, he consolidated his position and in no time, South Kosala under the hegemony of the Nalas emerged as a great power.

The political history of the Nalas is full of activities and achievements with a far flung and extensive kingdom. The burgeoning authority of the Nalas posed a potent danger and challenge to the powerful Vakatakas. There was protracted struggle between the two powerful dynasties of the trans-Vindhyan region since their inception. In course of time the Nalas succeeded to occupy and overrun the Vakataka capital and kingdom, and Nandivardhan the imperial capital of the Vakatakas became the seat of political activities of the Nala king Bhavadattavarman. With occasional reverses, the Nalas eventually contributed significantly to their final fall. The Nalas united the smaller pricipalities of the Parvatadvarakas, the Meghas and the Rajarsi-kula-tulyas. They fought many a pitched battle with the Vakatakas, the Sarabhapuriyas and the Eastern Gangas and still survived to rule up to 10th century A.D. Under Bhavadattavarman and Skandavarman the Nalas reached the pinnacle of political paramountcy with their capital at Nandivardhan and Puskari. During the time of Arthapati the Vakatakas attacked and devastated Puskari and even killed him. But Skandavarman an invincible warrior of his age exhibited exceptional courage at this juncture and retaliated the Vakatakas. He repaired and repopulated the devastated capital city and seemed to have marched triumphantly upto Nandivardhan. He created an extensive kingdom of his own conquest stretching over the whole of the traditional South Kosala region and contributed significantly to the final dismembering of the Vakataka Kingdom. Under his hegemony, thus the Nala rule was consolidated on solid ground in South Kosala region and his regime witnessed unprecedented exuberance of political and cultural activities. The disjointed principalities of South Kosala perhaps, for the first time came under one political banner under Skandavarman's dynamic leadership ushering in a golden era of cultural efflorescence in the history. As testified by the wide circulation of gold coins, he left a vast fortune to his successors Stambha and Nandanaraja under whom the Nala kingdom thrived.

The rise of the Eastern Gangas in Trikalinga region (Ganjam-Koraput) posed a potent danger to the Nalas and due to political expediency they were compelled to move to the North part of their original kingdom. The Nalas established their rule in Maraguda plateau and Rajim regions and ruled for many generation upto 700 A.D. till they were supplemented by the Panduvamsis. After a hiatus of 160 years the Nalas again emerged in Aska region of Ganjam district of South Orissa and ruled for many generations in diminished glory till 1230 A.D. from their capital Bhimapur near modern Aska.

The history of the Nalas from the 2nd half of the 8th century A.D. upto the beginning of 10th century A.D. is shrouded in mystery. The descendants of Prithvivyaghra might have been ruling over parts of ancient Nisadha country as

a petty political power during this period. Due to paucity of evidence, we are not in a position to connect the lineage of Bhimasenadeva [1] who appeared and ruled over Ganjam region in the beginning of 10th century A.D. with the former Nalas. Therefore, we would like to place him in the group of the Later Nalas.

**Bimasenadeva (C.900-935 A.D.)**

From the Pandia Pathar copper plate charter [2] of "*Maharajadhiraja Parmesvara Bhimasenadeva*" (who calls himself as of the 'Nalodbhava' family) we come to know that he was a Nala king. The charter has been dated in Bhauma Samvat that begins in 736 A.D. and accordingly S. N. Rajguru[3] has fixed the date of the grant to 925 A.D. So we can assign him sometime in the 1st half of the 10th Century A.D., tentatively between 900-935 A.D. Nothing is known about the ancestry and emergence of this king. However, from his high-sounding title "*Maharajadhiraja Parmesvara*", it appears that he was a great ruler. The grant was issued from Bhimapura identified with the present Bhimanagar near Aska in Ganjam district of Orissa, which is at present surrounded by hills and forest on all sides. As gleaned from this record, the kingdom over which Bhimasena ruled was called Khindirisringa Mandala. According to Rajguru "although it was named as Mandala actually it was an independent territory and situated between Kalinga Mandala of the Gangas and Khinjali Mandala of the Bhanjas". It is evident from the Madras Museum Plates [4] that Khindirisringa Mandala was a kingdom, consisting of a number of principalities or Zamindaries like Badagada, Seragada and Dharakot. In the epigraph Bhimasenadeva has been described as an ornament of the Nalodbhava family who ruled the entire Khindirisringa Mandala with great ability and powers of his own arms and who gained merit including strength to control the infinite *Samantachakras* [5]. From this, it is evident that he was a great, independent and powerful king who had controlled a host of feudatories i.e. *Samantas*. His Paramesvara title also testifies to his paramountcy and leaning to Saivism.

The grant records the donation of the village Kurmatala to Sadbhatta and Yajmi Bhatta Prakatana etc. for the increase of merits of his parents and himself. It is made in *Sambat* 189 and was written by Akradeva, the minister of war and peace *(Sandhivigrahin)*. The existence of the office of *Sandhivigrahin* in his regime indicates that he was actively engaged in warfare and garbed out neighbouring territories as an aggressor. D. C. Sircar [6] identifies Khindirisringa *Mandala* with the modern Kandarsinga located to the north of Brahmani river. His learned view does not appear to be correct since the records of Bhimasenadeva and Narendradhavala containing the name of Khindirisringa *Mandala* were discovered near Aska in Ganjam district. Formerly, the ex-Zamindaries of Dharakot, Seragada, Badagada and Soroda

were parts of Khindirisringa [7]. Therefore, very probably the kingdom of Bhimasenadeva was extending over these parts with its northern and western fringes comprising parts of Koraput and Bastar districts as well. His. capital was situated at Bhimapura near Aska. As evident from the inscription, he was a worshipper at the feet of God Sri Yamalingesvara.

**Narendradhavala (C. 935-960 A.D.)**

Bhimasenadeva was very probably succeeded by Narendra-dhavala [8]. He is known to us as ruling over Khindirisringa *Mandala* from his Madras Museum Plates [9]. Rajguru thinks. that the script used in this grant is decidedly a later development of the character of the Pandiapathar charter of Bhimasena. On this ground we may accept him as the successor of Bhimasena who ruled over the territory of the latter. In the grant, it is stated that one *Ranaka,* apparently a feudatory, Ghonghaka of Naga dynasty granted a village after purchasing it from Sri Silabhanjadeva in Gomunda *Mandala,* a part of Khindirisringa kingdom of Narendradhavala. In all probability Narendradhavala, the over-lord of Naga king *Ranaka* Ghonghaka was a scion of the Nala family, who had his suzerainty over a host of feudatory chiefs. The inscription records, *"Siddham Khindari-singhe Sri Narendradhavala rajye gomunda mandale dhara-minpa vinisruta Nagavamsa sambhava Ranaka Sri Madhu Varaha-Sutaranaka Sri Vikara Vikarasuta ranaka Sri Ghanghokena"* .

It appears that Narendradhavala was having his authority over a host of *Ranakas* like Bhimasenadeva. The Nagavamsi chiefs and probably the Bhanjas as well were their feudatories. Thus, he seemed to have ruled over the kingdom of Bhimasenadeva with his capital at Bhimapura. Interestingly the old Zamindaries of Dharakot, Badagada, Seragada and Soroda were originally known as Khidisingi, apparently forming parts of Khindirisringa *rajya* of the Nalodbhava kings in earlier days.

Since Bhimasenadeva has used the *Bhauma Era* in his grant N. K. Sahu [10] and S. N. Rajguru [11] speculate that he was palpably ruling as subordinate to the Bhaumakaras. However, from the glorious epithet of Bhimasena, it appears that he was an independent king having a hosts of feudatories under his sway. Since Bhauma Era was popular at that time and was perhaps regarded as a standard reckoning, so he seemed to have used the same in his charter. It does not necessarily mean his subordinate status to the Bhaumakaras. Thus, Bhimasena and Narendradhavala were the last independent representatives of the glorious Nala dynasty.

**Sobhanachandra Singh (C.1168-1206 A.D.)**

Of the ancient *Zamindars* of Khindirisringa *rajya,* the house of Dharakot claims its descent from the Nala dynasty. Sobhanachandra Singh, the founder of this family is said to have come from Jaipur region in the 12th

century and founded the principality of Dharakot [12]. V. Rangacharya [13] writes, "Dharkot is the seat of an ancient Zamindari adjoining Bodagada on the north and Goomsur on the east. It was originally a part of Khidisingy Zamindari alleged to be founded by Shoblianachandra Singh in A.D. 1168-1206. It became a separate Zamindari in 1476, when Boliar Singh divided the original estate into four divisions". Sobhanachandra Singh was perhaps a descendant of Narendradhavala, who ruled over the small principality of Dharakot as a Chieftain most probably of the Eastern Gangas.

**Purusottam Singhadeva (C. 1206-1230 A.D.)**

From the local records we know that Purusottam Singhadeva ruled over Dharakot after Sobhanachandra Singh, sometime in the beginning of 13th century A.D. (*"Aska Dandapati nalavamsaraju dharkot chief Purusottama Singhdeva"*)

His estate was in Aska region and was known to us as the last progeny of the glorious Nala dynasty. We have already indicated that the Nalas held their sway at different places like Raipur, Durg and Ganjam regions for about long eight hundred years. The present Zamindar family of Dharakot in the district of Ganjam claims its descent from the Nalas.

**Decline of the Nalas**

Similar to their origin, the precise causes of the decline and disintegration of the Nalas are shrouded in oblivion. The political history alludes their eventful reign of about eight centuries beginning from the 4th to 11th century A.D. in various parts of ancient Nisadha and Kosala country, primarily over the upper valley of Mahanadi including its tributaries with a strange carrier of varied fortunes.

Since their origin, the Nalas involved in protracted wars with many a neighbouring political power in the frontiers of their kingdom. In the early part of their career, they indulged in severe struggle with the Vakatakas. They are also known to have taken up cudgel with the Chalukyas, the Eastern Gangas, the Sarabhapuriyas and the Panduvamsis. In the middle of the 6th century A.D., they were driven out from their cradle land Puskari region perhaps by the Eastern Gangas and consolidated their position in Kalahandi, Raipur and Durg region. They entered into a career of protracted struggle with the Sarabhapuriyas and eventually their kingdom was occupied by the Panduvamsi Tivaradeva about 700 A.D. Thereafter, some scion of the family seemed to have founded a principality in Ganjam region, who were probably conquered by the Eastern Gangas. After Bhimasenadeva, the Nalas were known to have been reduced virtually to the level of petty political feudatory.

No kingdom nor a dynasty is permanent. Rise and fall are the processes of history. The Nalas like many other ruling families rose to eminence from an humble origin and nibbled down giving a prosperous rule of long eight hundred years, contributing immensely to the culture of Orissa. Through the vicissitude of time they confronted numerous adversaries and evidently survived many a political eclipse shifting their sphere of activities to different areas over the ancient Nisadha, Kantara and Kosala kingdoms and simultaneously spreading and diffusing cultural complex far and wide. Their final fall seemed to have been precipitated by the rising Imperial Gangas. However, the cultural heritage of medieval Orissa owes a great deal to the illustrious Nalas. Some scions of the Nala race even continued to rule upto 13th century A.D. with diminished political grandeur and the present day Zamindar family of Dharakot even today claim their descent from the Nala dynasty.

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# Jainism in Early Medieval Orissa: A Case Study on South Orissa

*Ananda Chandra Sahoo*

According to the believers of Jainism, their religion has been founded by Adinatha, also known as Vrishabhanatha or Rishabhanatha, the first *tirthankara;* of the order of the twenty four *tirthankaras;* in the hoary past. The details of the purpose of the birth of Adinatha have been recorded in Adi Purana, one of the important Jaina literary texts.[1] Historically, however, this contention has not been established. Modern historians believe that Jainism was founded by Mahavira, the last and twenty fourth *tirthankara,* upon the foundation of a religious system propounded by *Parsvanatha,* the twenty third *tirthankara,* which was known as the *chaujjama dharma.* Incidentally the parents of Mahavira had been the followers of the religion of Parsvanatha.[2] Yet other scholars argue that Jainism had an earlier history before Parsvanatha and they trace the historicity of Jainism to the times of Neminatha, the twenty second *tirthankara.* Even now there are controversies regarding the antiquity and historicity of the Jaina religious Order. There are significant affinities between the religion of Parsvanatha and that of Mahavira while one looks at the *chaujjama* order of Parsvnatha and that of the *panchajjama* order of the latter. Scholars generally accept the view that Jainism was developed and reached to a wider plane of the society during the life time of Mahavira during the sixth-fifth centuries B.C. At the same time it is believed that Mahavira developed his religion riding on the earlier *chaujjama* dharma established by Parsvanatha.

In the Jaina order the *tirthankaras* are known *as jinas,* i.e., the conquerors. The *jinas* are believed to have been conquered all the worldly happiness and sufferings and are beyond the temporal ordeals which the ordinary human beings are destined to go through and suffer. A *tirthankara* (Ford-finder) is also known as a *kevalin* who is believed to have been possessed the five utmost knowledge viz., *mati jnana (simple* knowledge), *sruti jnana (speculative* knowledge), *avadhi jnana (intuitive* knowledge of past events), *manahparaya jnana (knowledge* of thoughts and feelings of others) and *kevala jnana (the* supreme knowledge). The jinas, as believed by the Jainas, are of four-fold, viz., (i) *nama jina* or those who are *jinas* by name, e.g., Adinatha and others; (ii) *sthapana jina* or images of the *jinas* made up of gold, stone etc., which are made to be installed; (iii) *dravya jina* or those beings who

are endowed with the various qualities of a *jina*, e.g., Srenika and (iv) *bhava jina* or those who have attained *samavasarana*.[3] It is believed that the *tirthankaras* rose up to as many as five thousand man's height and the Vedic god Indra constructed the famous *samavasarana* which consisted of twelve *shabhas* in honour of the *jinas*.[4] In this context it may be pointed out that the above four-fold conception may well have indicated the antiquity as well as the spread of Jainism.

In the historical context, Jainism came to be regarded as one of the powerful religions to throw a challenge to the existing brahmanical religion during the sixth-fifth centuries B.C. The eastern part of Ancient India witnessed the activities of the *tirthankaras* in propagating their religion. During the life time of Vardhamana Mahavira, Jainism could become a powerful religion along with that of Buddhism which was founded by Gautama, the Buddha. Jainism spread to various parts of eastern India during the life time of Mahavira. There is no conclusive evidence to suggest that Jainism spread to ancient Orissa during the life time if Mahavira. However, literary evidences suggest to a period prior to that of the great Mauryas when Jainism had her sway in ancient Orissa. According to the traditional accounts, Jainism is said to have been introduced into ancient Orissa from the time of Aranatha, the eighteenth *tirthankara*. Apart from the regions which were directly blessed by Mahavira in the course of his wandering years, ancient Orissa was one of the important regions outside the areas of direct contact of Mahavira, witnessed the activities of the Jaina followers during the time of the Nandas of Magadha in fourth century B. C. As it is well known, this fact has been well attested in the famous *Hathi gumpha* inscription of the Chedi King *Mahameghavahana* Kharavela, who ruled in the eastern coast of India during the last quarter of the first century B.C. During this period Jainism saw her heyday in ancient Orissa. However, with the downfall of the Chedi rule in Orissa, Jainism seemed to have been remained in a passive state. The reasons for this state of affairs may be due to lack of royal patronage in one hand and that of the rise of brahmanical religions on the other. It has not been satisfactorily studied why Jainism did not get favour and become a living religion during the early three centuries of the Christian era when ancient India reached the high mark in trade and commerce. Incidentally, the bulk of the Jaina followers came from the trading community. The state of Jainism during the period of the Imperial Guptas is self explanatory as the Gupta rulers were devout followers of Brahmanism and more particularly that of Vaisnavism.

During the post-Gupta period, Jainism could reestablish itself as one of the living forces in different parts of Orissa. Archaeological evidences are in abundance to testify the provenance of Jainism in Orissa during the early medieval period. It is interesting to point out that during this period; apart from few exceptions no significant contributions to the cause of the Jaina religion were made. In ancient Orissa, the post Gupta period has been marked by the revival of both Brahmanism and Buddhism. There are evidences in abundance to suggest that various royal dynasties of Orissa patronized either Brahmanism or Buddhism. Royal support was accorded to different sects of the aforesaid religions. In comparison with the religions said above, Jainism was not that much fortunate to gain royal support. In spite of the lack of patronage, Jainism could still continue as a living religion particularly in the coastal regions throughout the early medieval period of Indian history. Findings of a large number of sculptural evidences from this region testify to our supposition. The coastal districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, the eastern region of the district of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar, Jajpur, Cuttack, Jagatsinghapur, Puri and Koraput have yielded quite large number of Jaina sculptural evidences. As far as the interior districts are concerned that of Dhenkanal, Angul, Kalahandi also yielded many Jaina artifacts. In this context, it is extremely significant to note that the regions which yielded the Jaina sculptural evidences were located in the very main land of ancient Orissa. Incidentally, as we have mentioned above, baring few exceptions no significant contributions were made to the cause of Jainism. In this context, however, we ought to recall some of the noted inscriptional and other evidences which throw light on the condition of Jainism in Orissa during the early medieval period.

The Chinese pilgrim Hiuen-Tsang provides us with a very significant piece of information as regards the state of Jainism in the first half of the seventh Century A.D.[5] Speaking about the provenance of Jainism, he has stated that among the unbelievers of the then Orissa, the *nirgranthas* were the most numerous group. Thus, evidently the Chinese pilgrim made a reference to the *nirgranthas* (the Jainas are known as the *nirgranthas)* as the unbelievers who had been referred so by the overpowering brahmanical followers. During the seventh Century A.D. the powerful brahmanical followers used to refer to the group of followers as unbelievers those who were not belonging to their own group. At the same time it is significant to note that outside the dominant brahmaniacal group, the other group of followers who were in significant number were the Jainas. This reference of Hiuen-Tsang clearly suggested the predominant existence of Jainism albeit among the non brahmanical followers.

Further, citing references from Hieun-Tsang's account it has been observed that the great Buddhist monk, Dharmakirtti, defeated Kumarila Bhatta of Kanchi and converted the Jaina saints of ancient Kalinga into the Buddhist faith. Referring to an inscription from the Nilakantheswar temple on a hill near Padmapur in Gunupur sub-division of Rayagada District, it has been suggested that the *ashrama* of the Buddhist monk Dharmakirtti was located somewhere near the find spot of the inscription.[6] This piece of information clearly suggested the provenance of Jainism in this part of Orissa and at the same time spoke of about the healthy academic and intellectual debates between the unorthodox believers. In this context, we may refer to some of the inscriptional evidences belonging to the contemporary period. Particularly for the study of Jainism in south Orissa the Banpur Copper plates of king Dhamaraja (c.690 AD.-720 A.D.) of the Sailodbhava dynasty is of great significance. In this record, in line 44, it is stated that Sri Kalyana Devi, the queen of Dharma raja; who was the actual granter; had granted land to a Jaina *muni Ekasata* Prabudhachandra, who was a disciple of the *Jaina Arahatacharya* Nasichandra. The queen "granted three 'Timpiras' of land in the village of Suvarnna Ralondi, situated in the Thorana Vishaya and two 'Timpiras' of land in the village called Madhuvataka, connected to the boundary of Randa village to Darhadacharya Nasichandra and his 'Sishya' Ekasata Pravrddhachandra, for offering the Bali, Satra and Charu till they live.[7] It is a well known fact that the Sailodbhava rulers were the followers of Saivism. Thus, in spite of her personal religious belief, which was evidently not Jainism, the queen donated land to a Jaina *muni.* Further, a Jaina inscription of four lines in the seventh century Orissan characters unearthed from the famous Buddhist site of the Ratnagiri hill now in the Kendrapada district of Orissa referred to the installation of a Jaina images.[8] This piece of information points out to the practice of the donation of images for installation purpose in this part of Orissa, though the region of Ratnagiri had been famous for its patronization to the cause of Buddhism.

The reign period of Udyota Keshari of the Somavamsi dynasty (c.1040 A.D.-1065 A.D.) marked a very significant stage in the history of Jainism. Two cave inscriptions of this king in two caves of the Khandagiri hill provide us with important information as regards the state of Jainism in Orissa. According to the Lalatendukesari cave inscription[9] the king in his fifth regnal year started the work of renovation of the decayed tanks and temples in the twin-hills of Udayagiri and Khandagiri. Further, he also set up the images of twenty four *tirthankaras* and an image of Parsvanatha in the caves of the Khandagiri hills.

A stone inscription of the same king in the Navamuni cave issued in his eighteenth regnal year indicates his concern towards the cause of Jainism wherein it is stated "The year 18 of the increasing and victorious reign of the illustrious Udyotakesarideva, (the work of) Subhachandra, the disciple of the lord, the illustrious Acharya Kulachandra, (Who) belonged to the Graha-kula, of the illustrious Arya-Congregation (and belonged to) the Desigana".[10] Thus the importance of the twin-hills of Udayagiri and Khandgiri and its adjoining areas was revived during middle of the eleventh Century A.D. as far as the history of medieval Jainism was concerned.

In early medieval Orissa, the existence of Jainism was never in doubt if one looks at the evidences cited above. The findings of a large number of Jaina sculptures, more particularly from the coastal regions of Orissa pointed towards the flourishing condition of Jainism in Orissa. The sculptural evidences along with that of the evidences gleaned from inscriptions and foreign accounts speak about the state of Jainism in early medieval Orissa. To make a case study of Jainism in south Orissa we have already referred to some of the important evidences above. Here under we propose to attempt a study on the available sculptural evidences from this region to know about the condition of Jainism. Here, it may be pointed out that the expression of the term South Orissa is not generally used in the context of studying the art materials to establish the provenance or for that matter the condition of a particular religious system in a particular region. So far as the study of Jainism in ancient Orissa is concerned, we are not in a comfortable position to take up the study pointing to one particular region. In other words, any region-specific study in this regard shall have its own drawbacks. However, if we look at the findings relating to the sculptural art in a general pattern is discemable. The findings provide an opportunity to attempt a study on the condition of Jainism in this part of Orissa.

For our practical purpose, here, we may take into account the sculptural evidences from the districts of Khurdha, Puri, Ganjam, Gajapati, Kalahandi and Koraput to study the condition of Jainism in south Orissa. Important sites yielding Jaina sculptures in this part of Orissa include Sisupalgarh, Kakatapur, Nibharana, Achutarajpur, Banapur, Puri, Panchagaon, Lataharana, Bagalpur, Chadheibar, Braharnesvar Patana (all in undivided district of Puri); Khalikote in Ganjam district; Junagarh (in the district of Kalhandi); Nandapur, Kachela, Suai, Borigumma, Jamuda, Kotpad, Charamula, Narigaon, Karnta, Mali Nuagaon, Devat Ganjara, Kafuaraguda, Pakhanguda, Palba, Chatua (all in the district of Koraput). The Jaina sculptural art and relics

found from the above mentioned sites are really very significant for our investigation. If we look at the entire sites yielding Jaina relics it can be suggested that the concentration of the Jaina settlements had been generally in the coastal region of ancient Orissa, which was thickly populated. However, a large number of Jaina sites concentrating in the hill tracks of the Koraput district and that of the district of Kalahandi may well suggest that, leaving aside their fovourable settlement regions in the coastal regions of Orissa, the Jainas preferred the difficult hilly tract of the said districts. In Orissan context, perhaps keeping the ancient tradition of concentrating in the coastal region as in the case of the twin hills of Udayagiri and Khandagiri in Bhubaneswar, the Jainas generally did not prefer to move into the interior districts of Orissa, except that of the districts stated above. This situation can be explained in the following way; Firstly, it might have been due to the lack of patronization to the Jaina community. Secondly, the community might have shifted their position towards a comparatively secluded region to pursue their religious cause whatever meagre assistance they could get keeping with the strict religious sanctions. In this context it is very pertinent to point out that in ancient Orissa there was hardly had any evidence whatsoever to indicate towards any religious persecution either by the opposite religious groups or by any royal house. Everywhere there was a high standard of tolerance and peaceful coexistence to which a number of evidences can be sited. Contrary to this, religious prosecution in other parts of eastern India was not uncommon. Thus, the religious establishments in the areas other than that of the more active regions were due to either lack of patronage or due to the choice of the Jaina followers. In this context the following remark is noteworthy, "Jainism has all along shown a remarkable non-antagonistic attitude towards Hinduism, which according to the competent authorities, is one of the causes of its survival".[11] The existence of Jaina temples in the district of Koraput is a significant development in this region. The ruined Jaina temples at the village Suai at the foot of the Panagiri hill in this district are among the few Jaina temples erected in ancient Orissa. Enclosed with a low wall there were originally some ten small temples ascribed to the later half of the eighth century A.D.[12] and dedicated to the Jaina *tirthankaras*. The survived few of them contained carved slabs of *tirthankara* and *sasanadevi* figures. Thus, this region witnessed a developed form of activity of the Jaina religious order.

The Jaina sculptures found from this part of Orissa are of considerable variety. As usual the *tirthankaras* images are the most favoured and revered creations. Apart from the *tirthankaras* images, a considerable number of the

images of *sasanadevies* are also carved side by side. Amongst the *tirthankaras* images, the image of Rishabhanatha, the first *tirthankara* of the Jaina Order, was the most favoured and popular image to have been carved. Apart from the images of the first *tirthankara,* the images of Ajitanatha, Santinatha, Parsvanatha and Vardhamana Mahavira have been carved. In yet some examples the image of Rishabhanatha along with the miniature carvings of the *ganadhara* figures are carved. So far as the figures of the *sasanadevies* are concerned, that of Ambika holding a child in her left arm, Chakreswari and the joint carving of Gomedha and Ambika are prominent. Apart from the stone carvings, the bronze figures of various *Jina* and other images are also a popular mode of carving particularly at Achutarajpur. The *tirthankara* images such as those of Rishabhanatha, Vasupujya, Chandraprava and Santinatha are among the most important carvings. Some other examples that we see the carvings of Neminatha along with Ambika, the *sasanadevi.*

During the post-Gupta period, the Jaina sculptures have been modelled confirming to the characteristics traits of the early medieval sculptural art. Needless to point out that during that period not only the Jaina sculptures but also the sculptures of other religious Orders were modelled following the same tradition. During this period in the *Jina* sculptures usually a symbol or cognizance *(chinha, lanchana)* is carved on the centre of the pedestal just below the cushion to show which *tirthankara* the image represented. The *Jina* figures are often very elaborate. The main figure is usually surrounded by numerous attendant figures such as the *chouri* bearers usually carved standing at the sides, kneeling devotees, *yaksha* figures, garland- carrying celestials and elephant-riders on both sides of the trilinear umbrella which is placed over the head. The pedestal is supported by couching lions. Quite often it is found that the twenty three other *tirthankaras,* in miniature form, are arranged along the sides and the top of the back slab, which together with the main figure in the centre complete the full number of the *tirthankaras.* In some of the examples from the throne above an ornamental clot hanged down between two lions. Generally, the throne is rested on two dwarf pillars with a pair of lions seated with one forepaw raised. In seating examples, *theJina* figures are invariably carved in *dhyana mudra,* while in case of standing examples, they are carved in the usual *kayotasarga* posture. In the field of the entire Jaina sculptural art, the carvings of Adinatha, the first *tirthankara,* outnumbered the other *tirthankara* figures. Such attempts on the part of the followers as well as the patronisors pointed to the fact that the Jainas believed in the age old antiquity of their religion.

The sculptures found from South Orissa broadly confirm to the iconographic situations. However, the general modeling of the figures have been comparatively crude and in many varieties lack in aesthetic sense. Side by side, with many life size carvings, less than life size figures have also been carved. At times, carvings are appeared to be clumsy and the attempts to carve the images have been half hazard. The sculptors seemed to have given their meticulous attention while carving the figures of the *sasanadevis*. Particularly in the carvings of the bronze figures, the sculptors of this region excelled themselves. The bronze sculptures of Achutarajpur, on the border of Ganjam, needless to point out, are the most outstanding examples of the contemporary bronze carvings.

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# The Chilika Lake: Its Past and Present

**Benudhar Patra**

The brackish water Lagoon Chilika has a lion's share in the glorious maritime activities ancient Orissa in general and South Orissa in particular. Its coast was dotted with numerous navigable ports such as Che-li-ta-lo/ Manikpatna, Palur/Dantapura, Dosarene etc. which has been attested to by the recent archaeological excavations, and the lake itself was a good anchoring point for the distant going vessels. The *Brahmanda Purana* has refers that thousands of sea-going vessels which were plied across the lake. It has also been referred to by the anonymous author of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (1st Cir. AD), Ptolemy (2nd AD) and Hiuen Tsang (7th AD). In this paper, a sincere endeavour has been made to analyse different aspects of the Chilika Lake-its origin, date, nomenclature, location, area, history and present scenario linking with social and economic phenomena. The core area of the paper, however, is to trace out the maritime history and navigational traditions of the lake and causes of its decline. The lake is a hot-spot of biodiversity, and it is on account of its rich biodiversity Chilika is designated as the "Ramsar Site'. The Chilika Lake is a proud treasure of India so far as the maritime history is concerned.

Chilika is the largest brackish water lake of India. It is pear-shaped having its wider end towards the north-east and the conical end towards the south and "is the largest open lagoon in Asia and the second biggest in the world". It is situated between 19° 28' and 19° 54' North latitudes and 85° 05' and 85° 38' East longitudes along the east coast of India extending from the south-west corner of Puri and Khurdha districts to the adjoining Ganjam district of South Orissa. It is 100 km away from Bhubaneswar, the state capital of Orissa. The lake communicates with the Bay of Bengal by a long zigzag outer channel (32 km long) through a single mouth called *Magara Mukha Muhana* (the shark-mouth-estuary) near the village Arakhakuda. It is one of the most numerous and awe-inspiring natural lake and indeed, a veritable wonder of nature.

**Origin and Time of Formation**

Regarding the origin and date of the lake there are divergent views by the scholars. Mythologically, it is said that the lake was an outcome of an inrush of the sea-water when the *Sudarshan Chakra* of Lord Krishna fell into the sea, when the Lord was on His way to *Swarga* (Heaven) [1]. Traditionally, it is believed that the lake was formed by an inrush of the sea. A legend of the fourth century A.D. says that a group of *Yavanas* (a strange race most probably the Muslims) under the captaincy of Raktabahu[2] (Red armed or one whose arm is smeared with blood) attacked the holy city of Puri and tried to plunder the temple of Lord Jagannath. But the priests of the temple got a wind of the progress of the invader from the litters carried by the sea in advance and managed to escape along with the precious image of Lord Jagannath and the wealth towards the shore leaving behind a deserted city for the invaders. Raktabahu, the disappointed general then advanced to punish the sea. The sea receded deceitfully for a couple of miles and then abruptly surged upon the presumptuous *Yavanas* and swallowed them up. Simultaneously, it flooded a great part of the land, and formed the Chilika Lake. A. Stirling[3] who had an access to the temple traditions of Orissa, in a slight different way refers to this episode of Raktabahu's invasion and formation of the Chilika Lake. The above mentioned theories, however, are far from satisfactory. In the view of K.C. Panigrahi[4] who has given 328 AD as the date of the invasion of Raktabahu is an enigma of the Orissan history. R.C. Panda[5] says that "the lake was in existence even before 370 BC". Further, the accounts given by the anonymous author of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* and Ptolemy in the 1st and 2nd Centuries AD do not justify either 318 AD or 328 AD as the year of the invasion of Raktabahu and the creation of the lake. In the first century AD, the unknown author of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*[6] has refered to the ancient port of Dosarene. The port of Dosarene was supposed to have been located somewhere on the bank of the Chilika Lake. Ptolemy[7], in the middle of the second century AD has referred to Paloura as an important port, which has been identified with the modern Palur in the southern tip of the Chilika Lake in the Ganjam district of South Orissa. From the accounts of both the writers it is, evident that the lake was in existence before 1st /2nd century A.D.

S.R.Rao[8] is of the opinion that the Chilika Lake was a part of the Bay of Bengal 5000 years ago. In the view of Engineer D. Pati[9] about 4000 years ago, it was a part of the Bay of Bengal. The *Aryamanjushrimulakalpa*[10] refers to the modern Bay of Bengal (*Mahodadhi*) as *Kalingasagara* (Kalingan Sea). On the basis of this evidence D. Pati said that the newly created lake was named as the *Chullakalinga Sagara* and later on the lake derived its name *Chullaka* or *Chilika*. This view of engineer Pati is also not free from criticism and appears to be inconvincible. W.W. Hunter[11] says that the Chilika Lake may be regarded as a gulf of the original Bay of Bengal. However, on the basis of the existing topography and geomorphology in and around the Chilika Lake, it is assumed that it was the cut off arm of the main sea around 5000 years ago. Analysis shows that the geomorphological feature is the important aspect which might have caused the formation of the Chilika Lake[12]. In due course of time, it was separated from the Bay of Bengal through a barrier spit which grew near Palur. The sand ridges adjacent to the spit have been built in part by constructive waves, tidal currents, storm waves and strong winds. Besides, the contribution of water by the distributaries of the river Mahanadi, which might have been filled by a local depression in the coastal plain, cannot be ruled out as the cause for the formation of Chilika. The scientific studies confirm that the process continued for more than three thousand years. It is believed that at one time, the Chilika Lake was a part of the *Mahodadhi* (the Bay of Bengal) and got separated by a bar of sand thrown up by the north moving ocean currents meeting the silt-laden Mahanadi[13]. The presence of many layers of estuarine shells, old planks and pieces of boat wood that were found out in the deeper layers of the islands inside Chilika proved that the lake was once a part of the sea and separated from the sea gradually[14].

**Nomenclature**

The nomenclature of the lake is subjected to various interpretations. Some says that the lake is named after a type of fish named *Chili*, while others say because of the abundant availability of the *Chila* birds the lake is termed so. On the other hand, scholars view that the shape of Chilika is like *Chili*, meaning eye brow and the name derived from this *Chili* like shape. But these interpretations scientifically seem to be very tenuous. On the basis of Hiuen Tsang's[15] (7th CAD) reference to Che-li-ta-lo some assumed that the name

might have derived from that name. It is also viewed that the name *Che-li* may represent *Chili* of Chilika and *ta-lo* is *tala* which means lake, thus Che-li-ta-lo stands for two words *Chili (ka)* and *tala*, the Chilika Lake. But this theory of nomenclature is also not acceptable because Che-li-ta-lo of Hiuen Tsang has already been identified with the Manikpatna port on the northern tip of the Chilika Lake. Whatever may be the theory of its nomenclature, Chilika Lake undoubtedly is an integral part of the history and culture of coastal Orissa.

**Extent and Location**

The area of the lake fluctuates in different seasons. During summer the lake water occupies an area of about 906 sq km and swells up to about 1165 sq km towards the peak of monsoon season[16]. The water of the northern half of the lake is fresh from August to December on account of the flood water of the rivers coming into the lake and salty from January to July on account of the salt water of the Bay of Bengal pushed into the lake by tides and strong winds from the sea. The average depth of the lake is from 1.52m to 1.83m and scarcely exceeds 3.66m[17]. The bed of the lake is a few feet below the level of Sea high water, although in some parts it is slightly below low water mark[18]. The lake bed, however, is now being gradually raised by the silt deposit brought in by the rivers. The neck which joins the lake to the sea is only few hundred yards broad. Through this the tide comes rushing and storming against the outward currents at certain seasons throwing it up in pyramidal billows topped with spray and looking like a boiling torrent in which no boat could sail[19].

In the west, the lake is walled in by lofty hills like Solery and Bhalery. In some places, it descends abruptly to the water edge; at another place it thrusts its arm in the lake which is called *Jatianasi*. In the south, it is bounded by the hilly watershed, which during the British rule formed the natural frontier between Orissa and Madras Presidency [20]. To the north, the lake loses itself in endless shallows, sedgy banks and islands just pepping above the surface formed by year to year from the silt which the rivers like Daya, Bhargavi and others bring down[21] .Towards the southern and eastern parts of the lake, there are a number of big islands. Thus, hemmed in between the mountains and the sea, Chilika spreads itself out into a pear-shaped expanse of water.

**Maritime History**

In the past, Chilika was a great centre of maritime activities for the people of Orissa. From different ports of this lake, sailors, navigators, traders as well as the pilgrims plied their ships to far off countries like Java, Sumatra, Bali, Borneo, Ceylon, Burma etc. The lake itself was a big harbour giving shelter to and providing security for thousands of sea-going vessels[22] .In spite of the paucity of data, the local traditions, the *Puranas*, the accounts left by the foreign travellers and the recent archaeological excavations and explorations around the lake have doubtlessly suggest to the predominant role of Chilika in the prosperous maritime history of ancient Orissa. Hiuen Tsang[23], the Chinese pilgrim (7th century AD) mentions that *Kung-Yu-To* (Kangoda) was a hilly country bordering on 'a Bay of the sea'. The Bay of the sea of Hiuen Tsang has rightly been identified with the Chilika Lake. S.C. Behera[24] in-course of his description on the Sailodbhava history has identified Hiuen Tsang's 'bay of the sea' with the Chilika lake. Hiuen Tsang described that Kangoda contained many rare precious commodities, and produced large dark coloured elephants which were capable of long journey. These elephants must have been used as the means of transport of commodities to various ports on the Chilika coast which served as a natural harbour. The location of ports like Palur, Dosarene and Manikpatna (Che-li-ta-lo) sufficiently supplement to corroborate this view. The discovery of a copper plate grant of Sailodbhava king Madhyamaraja[25] in the island of Parikuda in Chilika established the fact that this island of Chilika formed a part of the Sailodbhava territory. It also indicates our assumption that the Chilika Lake was frequented by the traders and merchants of the Kangoda kingdom. It is believed that the Sailodbhavas of Kangoda being ousted by the Bhaumakaras embarked from the port of Palur via Chilika across the high seas and contributed to the expansion of the Indian culture under the new nomenclature of the Sailendras in *Suvarnadvipa*[26].

The lake Chilika some times has given shelter to the people of Orissa and their supreme Lord Jagannath too. It is said that sultan Firoz Tughluq (1360 AD) with his vast troops in course of his Orissa campaign marched to an island within the lake where a large number of men, women, and children had taken shelter[27] .This lake was none other than Chilika. Some scholars, however, have identified the lake not with Chilika but with the Ansupa Lake of

the Puri district[28]. On the basis of the *Madalapanji*,[29] it is believed that at the time of the attack of Puri by Kalapahar, the *Sevayatas* (servitors) of the temple took away the image of Lord Jagannath and his associates from the temple and kept them hidden in an island in the Chilika Lake.

In the medieval times, people from the south India used to travel to Lord Jagannath of Puri by ships through the water route of Chilika. Towards the last part of the 15th century AD, this lake, too, witnessed the glorious home coming procession of *Gajapati* Purushottam Deva, after his decisive victory over Kanchi. During the British period, the lake served as a communication link from the Madras Presidency to the holy city of Puri[30]. It has indeed served as the gateway for the spread of the Indian culture abroad. Till today, on the coast of the Chilika lake, the people on the *Kartika Purnima* day (the full moon day of *Kartika* falling in the month of Oct.-Nov.) in commemoration of their rich maritime heritage celebrate the *Boitabandana* (worshipping of ships) festival, floating the miniature boats made of either of paper or banana peels, with lighted lamps inside on the water of Chilika.

There are several references about the existence of ports on the Chilika coast in ancient times. The Chilika Lake in those days made an excellent harbour for anchorage "crowded with ships from distant countries"[31] .The *Brahmanda Purana* of the 10th century AD describes that Chilika was an important zone of trade and commerce with thousands of ships[32]. With many ports on its coast, in the ancient times, the lake provided excellent anchoring facility for the ships bound for the South-east Asian countries like Java, Malaya, Ceylon etc.[33] It was very deep and through a wide opening mouth was connected with the sea, which provided easy breathing for the sea-going boats and ships. In the second century AD, the Greek geographer Ptolemy has referred to the port of Paloura which has been identified with the modern Palur village of the Ganjam district. During the 2nd century A.D. this port could have acted as an international port. Dosarene of the unknown author of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* was also an important port on the Chilika coast. The recent archaeological excavation at Manikpatna, in the northern tip of the Chilika Lake has proved the fact that it was an international port during ancient and medieval times.

Besides the above mentioned ports, from different *apheterians* (*Samudra- prasthana-stana* or the point of departures), the villages on the Chilika coast like Soran, Nairi,.Pathara, Kuhuri, Balia etc. had active overseas activities. The precious diamonds from the Hirakud area of the Sambalpur district[34] brought to different ports of the Chilika Lake through the routes of the river Mahanadi and its branches *viz*, Daya, Bhargavi, Prachi etc. which were then quite navigable and thence exported to foreign countries including the Roman Empire.

**Ship Building Centre**

The Chilika Lake was not only a great zone of maritime enterprises but also a boat and ship-building centre of ancient Orissa. The adjacent areas of Chilika like the villages such as Pathara, Sorana, Nairi were great centres of ship-building. Large sections of the coastal people were involved in the ship and boat building activities. They had the advance knowledge in the ship-building technology in comparison to other parts of India. They prepared well-built ships suitable for sea-voyages. Till today, in continuation of the past heritage a number of villages are traditionally engaged in boat building activities. In the ships, there were different organs for smooth sailing, i.e., the *Nava* instrument that gave velocity to motion, the *Matsya* instrument that steered the direction, the *Pakshi* instrument that ascertained the direction of the wind and the *Kurma* instrument that indicated the weather. The ships varied in shape and size as high and long, and were called *Unnata* and *Deergha* respectively.

**Decline of Navigational Activities**

With the ravages of time, the lake has greatly diminished in its extent and size. The navigational activities in the lake declined and the sea-going boat building industries around the lake vanished. Ships and big boats could not move in the lake safely in course of time. The traditional boat builders changed their building technology and constructed small boats with flat bottom which could move fast in shallow water. However, the primary cause for the decline of Chilika is the siltation[35] .The deposits of silt that the rivers carry in their flood water have destroyed the ports of Chilika. The vast amounts of silt brought by the rivers like Daya and Bhargarvi made the lake shallower[36]

.Besides sand siltation, the factors like tectonic activity, natural hazards, increasing coastal piracy and finally the settlement of the European trading centres on the Balasore coast led to the decline of the maritime activities of the Chilika lake. Regarding sand siltation at the mouth of Chilika, W.W. Hunter has remarked "the delicate process of land-making from the river silt at the north-east end of the lake is slowly but steadily going on, while the bar-building sea visibly plies its trade across its mouth. I find, from old documents, that a century ago the neck of land was only half a mile to a mile (.8 km to 1.61 km) broad, in places where it is now two. On the other hand, the opening in the bar was a mile (1.61 km) wide in 1780, and had to be crossed in large boats. Forty years later this opening was described as chocked up. Shortly before 1825, an artificial mouth had to be cut; and although this also rapidly began to silt up, it remained, as late as 1837, more than three times the breadth that it is now. The villagers allege that it still grows narrower every year. Indeed, so steady a worker is the ocean, that the difficulty in maintaining an outlet from the Chilika forms one of the chief obstacles to utilizing the lake as an escapement for the floods that desolate the delta. Engineers report that although it would be easy and cheap to cut a channel, it would be very costly and difficult to keep it open; and that each successive mouth would speedily choke up and share the fate of its predecessor".[37]

**Present Scenario**

Presently, the changing scenario of Chilika has attracted the attention of both the public as well as the Government of Orissa because of varied interests. A number of Indian organizations like Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) have undertaken different projects on the Chilika Lake. The lake is also identified as a priority site for conservation and management by the National Wetlands, Mangroves and Coral reefs Committee of Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India. The lake plays an important role in the history as well as the day to day life of the people of Orissa. Its scenery in different seasons is varied and in parts is exceedingly picturesque. The lake, indeed, is the queen of the natural beauty. In the south-west of the lake, hill ranges bound its shores and this part is dotted with a galaxy of petty rocky islands rising from deep water with romantic names. Among them the most enchanting one is Kalijai situated in the deepest part of the lake. Towards the north, the lake expands into a majestic sheet of water. On this side

numerous small islands are seen, all formed by the silt brought by the rivers. On the eastern and southern side there are bigger islands. The lake has been a source of inspiration through the ages to the poets, artists and philosophers. The fabulous beauty of Chilika once had inspired the Oriya poet Radhanath Ray to write his *Kavya* Chilika which has become an epic in the Oriya literature[38] and a masterpiece of descriptive geography.

The Chillika Lake is also a birds' paradise[39] .It provides an ideal breeding, nesting and wintering ground for enormous number of different kinds of resident and migratory birds. Its aquatic vegetation of reeds, insects, weeds and marine fauna offer the birds with delicacies which attract them every year from distant places. With them the lovely lake becomes alive with music and movements. The Nalabana Island within the lake has already been declared a Bird Sanctuary since 1973 by the Govt. of Orissa. It comes under the Wild Life Protection Act of 1972 from December 17, 1987.

Chilika is beautiful as well as bountiful. It significantly contributed to the economic prosperity of Orissa since the pre-Christian era. At present, it is also an important source for the economic development of Orissa. The lake forms a valuable fishing ground, which is a centuries old tradition in Chilika. It abounds in fish of all kinds, chiefly mugils and perch. Much of the Chilika fish is exported to the Kolkata market, on almost daily basis. It is said that one-third of Kolkata's fish supply comes from the Chilika Lake[40] .The Lake is also famous for prawn and crab fishing. From here, large quantities of prawns are exported to different places and this prawn export is a very lucrative trade of Orissa. Large quantities of oysters are also found in the lake. Thus, the lake served as a substantial source of income for the economic development of Orissa. It is estimated that the lake sustain the livelihood of more than 1, 00,000 fisher folk who live in and around it.

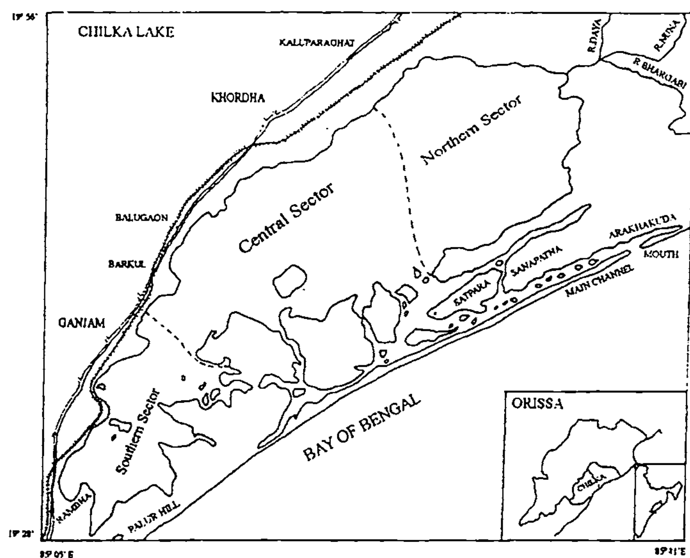
Chilika is also a very good destination for the tourists. Throughout the year it has attracted the tourists from different parts of the country and abroad. Owing to the availability of different varieties of weeds, insects, fishes and amphibians like snakes and frogs it is also an ideal place for aquatic biological research. It is worthy to mention that on account of its rich bio-diversity, Chilika is designated as a "Ramsar Site" (a Wetland of International Importance). The lake also serves as a health resort. The climate of the lake and

its islands is saline and warm throughout the year. Owing to its extreme saline quality the lake water is not suitable for bathing, yet, is suitable for those who suffer from long indigestion disorders. Hence, on account of its varied aspects, the Chilika Lake indubitably is not only the pride of Orissa but also of India.

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THE CHILKA LAKE

# Trade in Southern Orissa in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

**Lalatendu Das Mohapatra**

The area between river Godavari and Kalingapatnam on the bank of Vamsadhara in modern Andhra Pradesh were parts of Orissa for many centuries during the Ganga and Gajapati rulers. Anantavarman Codagangadev, one of the greatest rulers of Ganga dynasty had amalgamated both Kalinga and Utkal in the eleventh century. It was only in the sixteenth century that the rulers of Orissa lost control of this vital area to the Vijayanagar and subsequently to Golkonda rulers. When Orissa came under the Afghan rulers of Bengal in 1568 and subsequently under the Mughals in 1592, the areas beyond Chilka in the south were under the political control of the Golkonda rulers. However, in *Ain-i-Akbari* of Abul Fazl we find both Kalinga Dandapat and Rajamahendri, two among the five revenue *sarkars* of Orissa. [1] In the first half of the seventeenth century therefore this coast was a bone of contention between the Mughal rulers of Orissa and the Golkonda rulers. In spite of the fact that Orissa had no effective political control over this area, the region north to Godavari in the seventeenth century was known as Orissa Coast[2]. This was also known as *Gingelly* Coast, a name it derived from the oil seed Gingelly found in plenty in that area[3]. According to Thomas Bowrey this coast extended from the Bay of Coringa at the points Godavari to Jagannath (Puri) in the north. [4] The term south Orissa therefore convey to the entire *Gingelly* coast between Puri and Godavari in the present paper.

In spite of the fact that this area was a bone of contention between the Mughal rulers of Orissa and Golkonda rulers in the seventeenth century, this has not affected the overall trade climate of the region. However unlike Mughal portion of Orissa, our sources of information for the seventeenth century about this coast is not plenty. But this may be due to comparatively low European activities here for whom this was a secondary field of operation. The merchants of Ganjam, Bimilipatnam, Kalingapatnam,Manickpatnam Vizagpatnam and Coringo were engaged in coastal trade in foodstuff with southern Coromandel. In this century the most important port perhaps was Bimlipatnam from where the Dutch were procuring some coarse cotton textiles and rice for Masulipatnam and Ceylon.[5]

About this coast Thomas Bowrey, the English Captain of the seventeenth century writes that it was the "most delicate country for the use of the man...and the land aboundings with all necessaries for the sustenance of mankind".[6] To him this was "one of the most fertile lands in the Universe" where "they have annually 3 crops, each yieldinge great Encrease..."[7] and "...their butter and rice and Oyle the best in India. Their Oyle is for the most part made of Mustard Seeds and is Vendible all India and South Seas over."[8] In 1708, Hamilton found Ganjam, "fruitful in Rice and Sugar-Cane, and they make pretty good Sugars both white and brown.[9]" The other notable manufactures were bees-wax and iron, which were "pretty good. [10]"The inland countries also manufactured several sorts of cotton clothes of both fine and coarse varieties, which were fit for exportation. [11]

Traditionally the coast of Coromandel (beyond Godavari) depended upon Gingelly coast for their rice. This dependency, though not absolute, was still not inconsiderable. Generally, some areas in southern Coromandel produced sufficient rice, but when any natural calamity struck, they failed to meet their need and imported from the Orissa coast. Hence, the places to which she exported rice, would depend on the supply situation there. If there was any shortage in central or southern Coromandel, then almost all the shipments would be directed from Bimlipatam, Ganjam and Vizagapatam to ports like Palicat, Madras, Sadrasapatam and Porto Novo[12]. But if there was no shortage here, then rice from Gingelly was exported to Achin, Malacca, Ceylon, Maldives and even to west Asia[13].

Still some areas like Pulicat and San Thome imported their rice from Orissa coast regularly. In the twenties of the seventeenth century, the Dutch presence in the waters of eastern coast antagonized the Portuguese. Hence they tried to blockade some of the Indian rice boats from the Orissa coast going to Palicat, the newly established Dutch settlement. But the latter, as a counter measure not only protected the boats of Orissa, but also succeeded in diverting all of them, to their own settlement and prevented them from going to Portuguese settlement of San Thome. As a result, food shortage in the latter place became so chronic that seventy families fled to Pulicat as refugees[14]. This incident indicates the extent of dependency of some of the regions of Coromandel on Orissa's rice.

From the thirties of the seventeenth century the Dutch participation in rice trade became significant. In the early thirties and forties their Council at Batavia needed Indian rice to feed their colonies in Batavia and Malacca. The bulk of the rice which Coromandel Factors supplied to them was from Orissa and Bengal[15]. So rice trade from this coast received a rich impetus particularly in the mid-seventeenth century, largely due to the increased participation by the Dutch and the English. The Dutch exported rice from Bimlipatam, where they founded a Factory especially to procure rice in 1651. This rice, they exported mainly to Masulipatam, Ceylon and Narsapur[16]. But for English, it seems until this time, rice trade from this coast was not a part of their official policy. They exported their rice mainly through private traders to Fort St. George[17].

The fact that the rice trade in Bimlipatam was no less profitable is evident from the constant quarrel between the *Sher-I-lashkar* of Srikakulam and the Dutch Factors over the former's monopolistic attitude in this trade. The Government of that place was generally charged at exorbitant rates, which induced the governors to extort money by all possible means. Hence the Dutch procurement of rice involved constant haggling over prices and "when there was a change of governor, it was paid or contracted for"[18]. The climax of this trouble resulted in the arrest of many Dutch Factors and the occupation of the factory by *Sher-I-lashkar*'s men. But in spite of this trouble, the Dutch persisted with the Factory as it was one of the chief sources for the supply of rice to Ceylon[19]. By this time, the Dutch demand for rice in Ceylon had increased considerably because of the growth of many coastal townships. After 1658, the Dutch established new ports and administrative settlements which had to be fed[20]. Traditionally *Gingelly* Coast was regarded as the rice-bowl for Ceylon. The export of rice took place regularly from small to big vessels and this process was intensified if there was any acute scarcity in Ceylon. Hence, the Dutch retained the Factory at Bimlipatam, in spite of facing local troubles. In the mean time, they also obtained a *farman* from the king of Golconda in 1676, to which *Sher-in-lashkar* refused to honour. He also refused to abide by the orders for the restitution of the rice due from the ex-Governor of Bimlipatam and forcibly collected tolls in contravention of the *farman*. Thus failing to secure satisfaction by all peaceful means, the Dutch then decided to blockade the entire coast in 1677. The result was the complete stoppage of the movement of rice, the main commodity of trade in this region to Masulipatam

and its adjacent areas. As a result *Sher-I-lashkar* was pressurized from Masulipatam and Golconda to accept a compromise which he did by accepting the Company's term and the Dutch returned to Bimlipatam in 1678[21]. They continued to export rice to Ceylon from here and Negapatam until the mid-eighteenth century[22].

As regards the English East India Company, it seems that until 1687, the Company did not import any rice from Gingelly coast. But in 1687, their commercial contact with Bengal suffered severely following the quarrel and war with the Nawab. From onwards Coromandel became a consistently rice-deficit area. In this year there occurred a severe crisis in Madras following a famine there when "all sorts of grain and provisions excessive scarce and dear". In such a situation the Council in Fort St. George decided that if their ships could not import any grain and provisions from Bengal, then out of the three ships to Bay, at least two should be dispatched to Vizagapatam or Pandormarks (?) to procure grain[23]. It seems that afterwards, rice was bought regularly from Vizagapatam. In 1688, the Company made attempt to procure rice from Ganjam[24] for the first time which thereafter became a regular exporter to Fort St. George.

However in the eighteenth century, we see the rise of two ports Vizagapatam and Ganjam as a result of increasing investment of the English as well as Telugu and Pathan merchants. The rise of these two ports was the result of the decline of Masulipatam. From the nineties of the seventeenth century, trade in this port showed signs of decline due to a number of factors such as the disruption of hinterland with Hyderabad and Krishna-Godavari delta, continuous famines, rising prices of textiles, rise of taxation and the indebtedness of the Company's servants to the merchants.[25] All these led to gradual abandonment of this port and both the Telugu and the Muslim merchants were compelled to migrate to the ports such as Madras and San Thome in southern Coromandel and Ganjam, Vizagapatam and Bimlipatam on the *Gingelly* coast. This coast was now recognized as important textile exporting centres for the English and Vizagapatam was raised to the status of a divisional headquarter for the English in north Coromandel.[26] The English investment in Coromandel was remarkably well between 1712 and 1724. But after 1724 there was a decline; it again rose in prominence after 1734. The investment very often exceeded 100,000 a year. But the notable feature was

that while Madras itself showed no great improvement, the supply was increasing to Visakhapatam and Ingeram on the northern Coromandel and Madopallam in southern Coromandel. This trend continued till the close of this decade. But it is also to be noted that from the third decade of this century especially after 1724, the share of Coromandel was consistently below 20% of the total English export from India.[27] The main exporter to England from onwards was Bengal.

The first half of the eighteenth century was also remarkable for the growth of coastal shipping between Ganjam and Madras. The trade relation between these two ports was not new, but during this period it was intensified due to the latter's dependency for food-grains on the former. But there was not only an increase of trade between Ganjam and Madras, but also all the ports on the *Gingelly* coast continued to send ships to the region beyond Godavari, a grain-deficit area, which experienced a continuous deficit from the close of the seventeenth century. The following table shows the number of ships which plied between Ganjam and Madras between 1698 and 1750.[28]

**Table-I**

| Year | Arrived in Madras from Ganjam | Departed to Ganjam from Madras |
|---|---|---|
| 1698-1704 | 6 | 2 |
| 1705-1709 | 6 | 3 |
| 1710-1714 | 20 | 18 |
| 1715-1719 | 11 | 7 |
| 1720-1724 | 16 | 11 |
| 1725-1729 | 5 | 2 |
| 1730-1734 | - | 1 |
| 1735-1739 | 1 | 2 |
| 1740-1744 | - | - |
| 1745-1749 | 1 | 3 |

The above table only includes the ships of the Telugu and the Muslim merchants. The Telugus constituted an overwhelming majority.

Further, the table shows that at the close of the seventeenth century, the trade was not brisk. It suddenly picked up from 1710 but by the close of the third decade again it declined. Though the reason is not clear, Madras from this time onwards possibly depended more on other *Gingelly* ports like Bimlipatam and Kalingapatam for grains. For example, in 1729, five ships came from Kalingapatam and one left for that place. Similarly one came from Bimlipatam and three left for that place. But in this year only two ships arrived from Ganjam and no ship is recorded to have sailed from that place.[29] So far, we scarcely find any reference to these two ports in the English Diary and Consultation books. Only occasional ships in some years sailed to and fro. In 1730, two ships came from Kalingapatam[30]. But after that we do not find any regular shipping from this port any more. In 1732, four ships each arrived and departed for Vizagapatam and in 1740, four ships sailed for that port as against the arrival of two[31]. It is to be mentioned here that though the grain trade between Vizagapatam and Madras was regular throughout the eighteenth century, it was not so brisk like that of Ganjam in the second and third decades of the eighteenth century. However, this relationship was strengthened a bit from the thirties of the eighteenth century. From the early thirties, until the close of this decade at least two to three ships sailed in between these two ports in the name of the native merchants. Private British shipping also participated in it. But the shipping from Ganjam almost ended from the thirties of the eighteenth century. One possible reason may be that Madras now depended more upon Bengal for her rice[32].

Another major recipient of the food-grains of Orissa coast was Masulipatam. The calculation made by Indira Anand on the basis of Dutch records shows that in the year 1716-17, Masulipatam received 108 ships from the ports on the Orissa coast against 10 and 11 from Bengal and Madras respectively. In 1718-19, the figure was reduced to 66 excluding 13 from Cuttack. The figure for the next three seasons was between 26 and 37 but again it increased to 100 in 1722-23 against 10 and 15 from Bengal and Madras respectively and in 1725-26 the figure again increased to 142, against 29 and 13 from Bengal and Madras. [33]

Broadly speaking, eighteenth century was a period of many changes in the commercial sceneries of Orissa. While the Bengal portion of Orissa with her main port Balasore shows an obvious decline, the two *Gingelly* ports,

Ganjam and Vizagapatam exhibit signs of prosperity. Their coastal trade developed and the European investments also increased. But this prosperity of *Gingelly* could not come up at par the prosperity of the Bengal portion of Orissa in the seventeenth century. While Balasore in her heydays was certainly one of the major ports of the Indian Ocean because of her trade links with both Europe and South-East Asia, the trade in the *Gingelly* coast could not attain that level. Though the English made some investment in Vizagapatam when it was fed by Ganjam but their investment in the Coromandel Coast was trifling as compared to Bengal. The brisk coastal trade in Ganjam and other *Gingelly* ports was not more than a foot-note to trade of the Indian Ocean in the eighteenth century. Balasore also concentrated in trade with coastal India and Maldives. The net result was a decline of the Oceanic trade of Orissa. This process of decline was further aggravated by the Maratha invasion in the forties of the eighteenth century.

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# Storm over Malkangiri: A Note on Laxman Naiko's Revolt (1942)

***Biswamoy Pati***

Malkangiri was the western most tract of the Jeypur estate, which roughly formed the Koraput district in the pre-1947 period.[1] It was/is notable for its tribal population of Kandhas, Bhumiyas, Koyas, Parojas and Bondas, but of course containing many non-tribals as well – Paikas, Malis and outcastes such as Dombs, Gondas, Ranas, Hadis and Panas. It lies immediately to the north of the Gudem-Rampa area, scene of the fairly well-known *fituri* tradition[2] in present-day Andhra Pradesh. In August 1942, there was a major popular uprising in Malkangiri. The effort here is to outline the nature of social and economic divisions in this area and the contradictions between the people of Malkangiri and the Jeypore estate (of which it was part) and the colonial establishment, and then examine the process of mobilization and forms of protest which culminated in the uprising by Laxman Naiko.

## II

In 1802 the permanent settlement was introduced throughout Vishakapatnam under Regulation XXV of 1802, and the Jeypore estate was conferred upon Ramachandra Deo with a *peshkush* (tribute) of Rs. 16,000. In 1872 Malkangiri, which had been leased out to Bangara Devi by the Maharaja of Jeypore for Rs. 3,500 was taken over by the Raja and came to be directly administered.[3] The *peshkush* stood at Rs. 16,000 in 1941. Interestingly, the income of the estate was Rs. 12 lakhs, and forests yielded another Rs. 4 lakhs.[4]

Malkangiri was under the *mustajari* system. The *mustajars* who were usually village headmen enjoyed a number of hereditary rights. They were required to collect taxes from the tenants and make payments to the estate, neither of which was fixed. They held *hetha-bhumi* (i.e. rent-free tenures) and enjoyed some privileges regarding the use of the forests. On certain occasions they entered into profitable contracts with the Public Works Department to supply labourers. Some of them also appear to have recruited *gotis* and *bethias*, different categories of bonded labourers which are explained below. The

*mustajars'* relationship with the estate was based on 'custom' and hence not very clearly defined.[5] Neither the taxes due from the tenants nor the amount to be paid to the estate was fixed, so that there was room for manipulation and bargaining. Consequently, the position of the *mustajars* was quite ambiguous. Thus, the *mustajars* exploited their tenants and labourers and enjoyed certain privileges, but they also had certain grievance in common with the cultivators below, especially when it came to meeting increased tax demands of the estate. There was a degree of insecurity, for the *mustajars* could be dismissed by the estate.

Below the *mustajars* were the tillers, both settled agriculturists and shifting cultivators. The former had occupancy rights granted by the Madras Estates Land Act (1908), but in practice they could be dispossessed by the *mustajars*. Moreover, the *mustajars* sometimes resorted to illegal exactions from the tenants. The latter paid rents on the 'seed capacity' of the land, and in some areas they paid rents on the number of ploughs and hoes they owned. In both cases the rent was paid in grain. Some people engaged in *podu* (i.e. shifting cultivation) escaped the taxation system because of the inaccessibility of the forests and the nature of cultivation. Thus, they would burn a portion of the forests and, fence this plot, till the soil and sow seeds, and return after a gap of some months to reap the harvest.[6] For those among the *podu* cultivators who did not pay taxes, the number of ploughs and hoes they owned formed the basis of the assessment. In some parts of Malkangiri like the Motu *tahsil*, the tenants paid only cash rents.[7]

In some cases the occupancy tenants as well as the holders of the *inam* lands sub-let a portion of their holdings on the 'sharing system'.[8] When this was done the occupancy rights appear to have remained with the persons who sub-let their land. The settled occupancy tillers (and in some cases those engaged in *podu)* paid taxes in grain to the *mustajars.*

The agricultural labourers formed a class of people who were paid in grain (one and a half *kunchums*, roughly three and a half kilograms of paddy per day). The non-agricultural labourers (coolies) worked for wages between 3 to 4 *annas* per day in the 1940s.[9] Malkangiri also had *goti* and *bethi* labourers. The former bound themselves for a sum of money to serve for a period till the loan together with its interest was repaid. The latter were forced labourers.[10]

**Contradictions between the zamindari and the people**

Let us now turn towards the contradictions that existed between the estate and the people of Malkangiri. These included oppressive features like *bethi, goti* and *gudem.* According to official estimates, there were three categories of *bethi*; (a) forced and free labour; (b) forced and inadequately paid labour; (c) forced but 'adequately' paid labour. The first category included the forced labourers recruited by government officials (i.e. lower order officials and police), estate officials and *mustajars.* However, the estate was the most organized exploiter. The second category included recruits from particular villages, who were expected to perform domestic work for the government and estate staff. Around 1940, these people were paid at the rate of one *anna* per day. Finally, there were forced recruits who carried *dak* and luggage of the officials of the estate and the government when they went out on tours. They were paid fixed amounts considered inadequate by the recruits themselves. The system of *bethi* was, in general, hated by the people of Malkangiri. For example, the Koyas preferred to settle down in the interior areas for fear of being recruited for *bethi.*[11]

While *bethi* represented labour-extraction unconnected with any credit mechanism, the *goti* system was one of bonded labour in return for advances in money or grain. The *goti* system implied that on receiving some advance in money or grain the person engaged himself by a written agreement to be a labourer for his creditor for agricultural and domestic purposes as long as the loan together with the interest remained unpaid. It needs to be emphasized is that some *mustajars / naikos,* also recruited *gotis.* The system degenerated into serfdom since the *sahukars* took advantage of the illiteracy of the people to manipulate calculations. This contributed significantly to the problem of landlessness and migration.[12]

*Gudem* was the forced supply of provisions and thatching material to the estate and its officials, government officials as well as contractors of the Public Works Department on payment of a fraction of the actual price. Malkangiri was notorious for this illegal practice which created great hardships for the people.[13]

The system of taxation in the estate was arbitrary in several respects. Our evidence indicates that in Malkangiri the land tax was levied in three ways. Normally, the *raiyat* paid as rent a quantity of grain equal to the amount required to sow the land. However, in some inaccessible parts the rent was fixed on the number of ploughs and hoes owned. We also have evidence of cash rents being collected. The system had certain implications which acted adversely against the people. When the grain was taken to the estate granary to pay the rent, tolls had to be paid for using the main loads. Assessment on the basis of the number of the ploughs and hoes owned meant heavy pressures since there was no uniform system of assessment, and because this did not take into account the quality of the land cultivated nor the quantity of the harvest reaped. Moreover, even if the land was left fallow, the tax had to be paid. The payment of cash rents was linked to the evolution of a market and a money economy, and the emergence of moneylenders. Finally, it must be mentioned that the non-tribal peasants had to pay more than the tribal-peasants.[14]

We should now turn to the erosion of traditional rights during the colonial period. These are illustrated well in the case of the forests. In the Jeypore estate the forests were owned by the Maharaja. After 1900 the penetration of profit motive altered the situation, and, unlike in parts of coastal Orissa, this process was relatively rapid. On the one hand the forests were demarcated and leased out for profit by the *zamindari* and leases were granted. By 1907 an area of 327 square miles had been reserved in the estate, and this had risen to 1,645.14 square miles by 1939.[15] In Malkangiri, timber leases were granted in 1917 for railway sleepers to H. Dear and Company which were renewed in 1922 for twenty years, and to Motu Industries in 1937 for ten years for teak, *bija*, *hallandu* and sisoo.[16] On the other hand a battle against *podu* was unleashed. In this tract *podu* was preferred to settled agriculture because it was hilly and forested, and since *podu* proved economical for the poorest cultivators.

The eagerness of making profits out of the forests also led to the enforcement of a forest cess as a regular tax and an arbitrary system of fining people, often on false grounds, for 'stealing' wood. Anybody accused of stealing wood was forced to pay a rupee and a hen as fine. In an area like Malkangiri, where money was scarce the latter cash fine was unbearable.[17] Further, the rights over trees which stood on the holdings of tenants were also

lost – they were forced to make payments when they cut down trees of the reserved species, and they could not enjoy the fruits either. The estate officials forced them to part with tree products like lac, which was refined at Jeypore, but paid them nothing in return.[18]

Similarly, restrictions were imposed on the use of tanks.[19] The taxes on opium and the 'shandy' dues (most probably excise duties) were also disliked. All these features created a sense of deprivation since it came to be increasingly felt that customary privileges were being lost.[20]

The growth of a market and a money economy produced certain far-reaching consequences, which we should now turn to. Let us begin by examining the uneven situation within the Jeypore estate.

**Table I**

**Prices of rice and salt in 1940[21]**

| Place | Price of rice (per rupee) | Price of salt (per maund) |
|---|---|---|
| Gunpur | 11-12 seers | Rs. 2.5.0 to Rs. 2.6.0 |
| Jeypore | 14-16 seers | Rs. 3.0.0 |
| Malkangiri | 26 seers | Rs. 5.0.0 |

The low price of rice which was a local produce, and the high price of salt which was imported into Malkangiri, indicates the heavy burden that had to be borne at this time by the local people. Fluctuations in prices, the collection of land-tax in cash and the dependence on the market for purchasing certain essential commodities like salt and kerosene (which were not produced in this district) led to increasing dependence on moneylenders (i.e. Oriya *sundhis* and Telugu *kumutis*), who were mostly from the plains. On some occasions standing crops were pledged to the moneylenders in advance.[22]

These problems were compounded by the considerable increase in population after 1921, which is indicated by the following figures[23]:

**Table II**

| Years | Percentage increase in population |
|---|---|
| 1921-31 | +41 |
| 1931-41 | +17 |

The increase in population meant a rise in the pressure on the land, given the absence of any alternative employment opportunities. In this situation an increasing number of holdings were sold off for non-payment of rents and debts. Although we do not make the exact data for Malkangiri, the following table, which shows the amount of land sold in the Koraput district between 1936 and 1942, will offer some insight into the problem.[24]

**Table III**

| Years | No. of cases in which land holdings were sold | Amount of arrears for which this was done | | | Amount realized | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Rs. | A. | P. | Rs. | A. | P. |
| 1936-37 | 54 | 7,637. | 5. | 11 | 6,972. | 9. | 0 |
| 1937-38 | 33 | 7,950. | 2. | 10 | 3,938. | 4. | 0 |
| 1938-39 | 25 | 5,593. | 15. | 1 | 5,175. | 0. | 0 |
| 1939-40 | 47 | 6,171. | 0. | 0 | 6,785. | 0. | 0 |
| 1940-41 | 25 | 2,822. | 0. | 0 | 3,297. | 0. | 0 |
| 1941-42 | 77 | 8,778. | 0. | 0 | 8,426. | 0. | 0 |

The growth of migration also reflected the development of a very difficult situation. Around 1940 nearly two to three hundred people migrated from Malkangiri annually.[25]

*Laxman Naiko*

It will help to situate Laxman Naiko of Tentuligumma in this context. A Bhumiya, Laxman inherited the post of a *mustajar* from his father. Oral evidence suggests that Laxman worked on a 'joint land' of about sixty to seventy acres along with his kinsmen, variously estimated to number between twenty-five and ninety. All of them depended on this land for their existence. Whenever a couple were to have a child, they were given fifteen *putties* (approximately nine bags) of rice and were asked to leave till they could return to work again.[26] Following local custom, Laxman, as the *naiko* (i.e. *mustajar)* was in charge of paying the taxes to the estate.

Although, he was a *mustajar* it is not possible to dismiss Laxman as a *mustajar*, or even as a 'rich' peasant, given the nature of agricultural production in the Malkangiri tract. Till he came to get actively involved in politics, he worked on this 'joint land' like his relatives. Consequently, the link between him and his relatives can in no way be equated to an affluent *mustajar* exploiting the village folk, extracting a surplus and surrendering a major portion of it to the estate. It needs to be also mentioned here that in Laxman's case exploitative practices may have been mitigated by kinship ties. It was not possible to gather any information regarding his recruiting *goti* or *bethi.*

Even as late as the 1940s the relationship between the *mustajars* and the tribal peasants in Malkangiri was a close one, although some of the *mustajars* resorted to practices such as *bethi* and *goti.* Kinship links probably reinforced this closeness in many cases. The experience of some of the *mustajars* from the plains tends to support this view. In such cases the clash of interests between the *mustajars* and peasants was often felt sharply, unrelieved as it was by kinship ties. We may refer here to Kesab Patro, a *mustajar* of Badhigar, who was opposed in the course of the revolt.[27]

## III

Malkangiri has a rich legacy of popular movements, although it is largely neglected in historical research. Around 1879-80 the powerful Koya revolt in the Rampa area of East Godavari had swept this tract. In 1880 Tomma Dora, a Koya rebel, captured a police station (at Motu) after a fight, and defeated a Colonel along with his contingent who came to protect Motu from Hyderabad. Thereafter, Tomma was hailed as the Raja of southern Malkangiri. However, the movement collapsed after Dora was attacked and shot down by the police in July 1880.[28]

Alluri Sitaram Raju's rebellion in the Rampa area also evoked considerable response from this region. In this phase (1920-24), the Congress had not struck any roots in Malkangiri. Nevertheless, among those who had been actively stirred were the Koyas. Issues such as *bethi* and oppressive forest rules contributed significantly in securing support for Raju in Malkangiri. There are references to Raju's presence at Malkangiri. The contribution of the Maharaja of Jeypore in helping to crush the rebellion 'in the matter of transport and supplies and his generosity in making most liberal donation to the men engaged in the operations' also suggests that the repercussions in this area were not inconsiderable.[29]

It seems Laxman was directly influenced by this uprising, twenty years before his own rebellion in 1942. It was in this phase that he came into contact with Ramchandra Kutia, a Koya youth, who had joined the *fituri*, and learnt to use a gun. He had the opportunity of going around the area and understanding the problems which affected the people. His subsequent interest in astrology and medicine (locally known as *desari* traits) indicate his contact with Sitarama Raju's rebellion and his belief that this could help him to strike roots among the people in the Malkangiri tract, in the manner of Sitarama Raju.[30]

### *The Congress in the Jeypur zamindari*

There is a gap in our information between this phase and 1938 when we hear again about Laxman Naiko. In between, the Jeypore estate witnessed a turmoil during the Civil Disobedience movement, although the Congress had not established a secure foothold here.[31] After Koraput district merged with

Orissa on 1 April 1936, the Provincial Congress Committee (hereafter PCC) made serious efforts to establish itself in the district. Through the hard work and dedication of Radhakrushna Biswasroi, Radhamohan Sahu and Sadasiv Tripathy (who had a certain amount of popularity in this district owing to their political activities) the PCC extended its influence among the people. The Congress came to be looked upon as an instrument to redress existing problems. In the elections of 1937 all the three PCC candidates (i.e. Biswasroi, Sahu and Tripathy) won; Sahu won from the Jeypore-Malkangiri constituency. The electorate[32] voted against the two candidates of the *zamindari*, Bidyadhar Singh Deo and Balakrushna Patra, and also preferred the Congress candidate to Hari Har Mishra, an activist of the Utkala Sammilani. Bidyadhar Singh Deo was the nephew of the Maharaja while Balakrushna Patra was the lawyer of the *zamindari.*[33]

The Congress Revenue Minister's assurance in the Orissa Legislative Assembly on 12 September 1937, that all illegal levies in the Jeypore estate would be stopped,[34] was one part of the PCC's response to popular grievances after the Congress had won the elections. Placed in an advantageous position after the elections, the PCC wasted no time in attempting to consolidate its position in the area. Congress propaganda spread like wild fire in the *zamindari* and rigorous efforts were made to recruit members.[35] The new Congress recruits were sought to be remoulded in line with Gandhian prescriptions. For achieving this purpose a training camp was opened in November, 1938 at Nuaput (about five miles from Jeypore). This was attended by some three hundred people and it lasted for three months. During this period the new recruits were trained in spinning, scouting and village service. They were also given lessons on farming, animal husbandry and prohibition of liquor. These people were to serve as the link between the Provincial Congress and the people of Koraput. Among them was Laxman Naiko.[36]

The inhabitants of the Koraput district welcomed the Congress by 'taking forcible possession of land' under the leadership of 'new Congress recruits'. This caused a number of 'petty' riots and in 'one instance the Congress flag was planted on such land and the local Sub-Inspector, who arrested the accused persons was attacked with an axe.'[37] Efforts were also made to replace *gandas* (i.e. village *chowkidars* appointed locally by the village folk) by Congress members.[38] Besides, there was a sudden spurt the area of *podu* as Table IV indicates.[39] This was a rough indicator of the renewed enthusiasm to re-assert lost rights.

**Table IV**

***Podu* cultivation in the Jeypore estate**

| Year | Acreage |
|---|---|
| 1934-35 | 3,294.20 |
| 1935-36 | 3,552.40 |
| 1936-37 | 3,706.95 |
| 1937-38 | 4,658.80 |
| 1938-39 | 3,510.21 |

The violation of forest laws was not only confined to the estate or Malkangiri but also affected the Kondagaon *tehsil* of the adjoining Bastar state. In early June 1938 several thousand *harra* trees were cut down by the villagers 'in imitation of the tenants of the Jeypore estate'.[40] One also comes across funds being collected in various parts of the Jeypore *zamindari* to set up Congress *ashrams*. In many cases timber was illegally taken for this purpose. Rumours circulated that the district police would be prosecuted and the Magistrate removed by the Chief Minister of Orissa,[41] presumably because they tried to prevent such activities.

The recruitment drive of the PCC continued successfully, and was closely associated with a variety of rumours. In the early part of July 1938 rumours spread in some parts of the estate that 'Mr. Gandhi will visit the area soon and those who do not produce Congress tickets will suffer from ailments.'[42] Enthusiasm was also generated by the PCC promises that under *swaraj* 'there would be no rents and taxes and no forest laws'. In fact, historians seem to be immune to the shifts and changes associated with the process that saw the conversion of tribes to Hinduism – a phenomenon that has a much older history but became seriously pronounced in this phase.[43] This trend led to the virtual deification of Gandhi in some places and 'temple ritual took place at the Congress office.'[44] Among a host of other factors, this was connected to the increase in the primary Congress membership which was

indeed striking. Thus, in October it stood at 50,048 (Koraput came only second to Cuttack district which had a membership of 58,878).[45] In fact, the Koraput District Congress Committee could purchase (and maintain) a car, a typewriter, an almirah and set up a library out of the four-*anna* collections.[46]

It was at this point that the real character of the PCC surfaced. In November 1938, a rousing welcome was given to Congress leaders like Godavaris Mishra, Dibakar Pattnaik (members of the Orissa Legislative Assembly) and Gopabandhu Choudhury. Among those who received them were Bidyadhar Singh Deo, the nephew of the Maharaja of Jeypore. The *Jubaka Sangha* was established under his leadership, and, interestingly, the President and Secretary of the *Sangha* were Congress members. Singh Deo became the President of the *Harijan* movement[47] and began indulging in intellectual pursuits, studying the *goti* and *bethi* on which he wrote papers. He appreciated the 'liberal attitude' of the estate vis-à-vis the *gotis*, but felt that it should be 'discontinued as far as practicable'.[48]

While visiting the estate in June 1939, 'ostensibly with the object of enquiring into the allegations made against the officials and the Jeypore estate' the Chief Minister of Orissa, Biswanath Das made it 'quite clear that the law must be obeyed and if any change was necessary in the existing law it was for the ministers to affect the change and *not for the people*' (emphasis added).[49]

In Malkangiri, we find that Laxman was appointed as the President of the Congress Primary Committee of Mathili, which was formed by Radhamohan Sahu. This had a considerable effect on Malkangiri. By 1941-42, Tentuligumma alone 'boasted of a paying membership of 200 members'. The *charkha* penetrated the different corners of Malkangiri, and along with the *ashram* schools established at various places like Udoyogiri, Pandra Guda and Tentuligumma, served to strengthen the position of the PCC. Many tribal supporters in this tract, like Laxman himself, gave up hunting and eating meat.[50]

The *desari* traits of Laxman might have helped him initially, but in the 1938-42 phase his popularity was based on his leadership of local struggles. A significant development was the anti-War agitation, which began in the zamindari even before the Congress and the PCC launched the 'individual

*satyagraha'*.[51] The 'individual *satyagraha'* in the estate was closely connected with *khadi* spinning and village-uplift, and saw the predominant participation of tribals and outcastes, mostly small cultivators and agricultural labourers. Interestingly, most of them gave up eating beef and consuming liquor, spun *khadi* and engaged themselves in 'village reconstruction'. There are references to tribals working in 'Harijan *bastis*' to uplift the latter and the efforts of one aspiring *satyagrahi* to stop an early marriage.[52] Such features illustrate the deeper processes of hinduisation and the way it enabled the PCC to expand in the Jeypur zamindari in this phase.

Laxman was very much a part of the anti-War agitation. In 1939 he was arrested for launching a no-rent campaign at Mathili. In 1940-41, along with seven local people he launched individual *satyagraha* twice – once near the Ramgiri Outpost limits (in the adjoining Jeypore sub-division) and once in the Mathili police station jurisdiction. For this he was sentenced to two terms of six months' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 300.[53] It was through these *satyagrahas* and struggles that a pressure from below developed against *bethi, goti,* illegal exactions, 'shandy' (viz. excise) dues, plough tax, the stringent forest laws and the War collections.[54] When Krushna Chandra Bisoi (a student of class six) walked from Jeypore to Tentuligumma around 1939 he came across several villages (in the five days he walked) where he heard about Laxman's activities – his meetings, discussions and slogans against *panu* (viz. taxes), *bethi*, *goti*, *gudem*, etc. Laxman used to move extensively in this 'forest country', usually covering thirty to forty miles a day. To the people he was the 'Gandhi of Malkangiri', and, as long as he was alive they used to follow him in crowds wherever he went.[55] When Laxman went out on these tours he used to tell his wife Manguli that he was going to get *raija (swaraj)*.[56]

The activities described above caused considerable anxiety to the Maharaja, the estate authorities and the colonial administration. They struck back with repression through the police and the *amins*. They also tried to mobilize moneylenders, some village headmen and other 'internal exploiters' and 'opportunists' against Laxman[57] in order to counter the militancy that had developed.

*The Storm of 1942*

Laxman Naiko attended an important meeting of the Congress *karmees* (viz. workers) at Jeypore on 31 July, 1942 at which it was decided to send Biswasroi to attend the All India Congress session at Bombay.[58] The Congress organization in Koraput was declared illegal on 9 August, 1942.[59] Laxman, along with Balaram Pujari and others mobilized about two hundred men. They were 'armed' with saplings, cudgels and *lathis*, and carrying Congress flags they moved through dense forests campaigning for *swaraj*.[60]

On 16 August, 1942 some Congressmen threatened to loot the opium shop at Badhigar unless Sadasiva Choudhury, the vendor, surrendered his stock of opium immediately.[61] The 'crowd', composed of tribals and non-tribals (agricultural castes) from the Mathili and Padwa police station area, 'armed' with *lathis* and Congress flags, entered into Sadasiva Choudhury's compound. In a fit of panic the latter surrendered ten *tolas* of opium, his scales and his weights. After this, the leaders 'distributed the ... opium amongst their following. The purpose of this demonstration ... was to protest against Government obtaining revenue from this popular means of relaxation.'

After their success, the people went on express their displeasure with the *mustajar*, Kesab Patro, 'whose ryots most of them' were. This *mustajar* had 'for long been unpopular for his alleged *zabardast* (viz. strong arm tactics) ways with many from whom cist (viz. revenue) ... [was] due through him to the estate.' Kesab Patro had gone away to attend to his property matters at neighbouring Govindapally. The crowd felt disappointed on discovering this. It proceeded to Khogan, about three miles away from Badhigar. The liquor shop owner, Padam Bisoi, was forced to close his shop, and his signboard was removed and thrown away.[62] The 'crowd' then proceeded with great enthusiasm to the *hat* at Badhigar, 'trampling down the wares and produce for sale and knocking over people in their mad rush' – actions which the official version labels as 'rioting'. The attack on Badhigar *hat*, however reflects a widespread feature of the revolt. The *hats* were, after all, points where people interacted with the outside world which ranged from market forces to rumours. They served as important centres of discussion and were used to decide on future action and to mobilize support.[63]

On 23 August 1942 another interesting event is reported from Nuagaon, in the Mathili police station area. A 'Congress crowd' of about two hundred, threatened to burn the house of Gangadhar Guru (who owned a food store) of Nuagaon, unless he provided them with food. According to a petition submitted by Guru, after satisfying their hunger 'the intruders took also ... [his] valuables (i.e. clothes and Rs. 200 in cash) lying invitingly there'. However, according to the police investigation report Guru's allegations regarding the theft were false.

There appears to be a difference in the response of the 'crowd' which distributed opium at Badhigar, and the 'attacks' on liquor shops, led by Laxman Naiko at Kongrabeda, where liquor was destroyed not distributed. After this Laxman led his 'band of rowdies' to Kuntipalli and 'attacked' the liquor shop at around noon on 17.8.1942. The 'crowd' (composed of tribals and non-tribals, like Gaudas) reached the place shouting slogans, 'brandishing' *lathis* and Congress flags. The pots containing the fermented *mohwa* and the distillation apparatus were destroyed. Although the owner estimated the damage to be around Rs. 500, 'it was found later not to be more than Rs.100.'

Laxman led another successful destruction of the Sindhabeda liquor shop on 18 August, 1942. After this he deputed Padlam Naiko (of Kaliaguda) and a 'party of soldiers' to 'raid the opium shop at Salimi, eight miles west of Sindhabeda. About 3 p.m. the contingent reached the opium shop owned by S. Chandrasekhar Patnaik, which was situated in the verandah of his house.[64] The 'crowd' destroyed thirty eight *tolas* of opium. Bhima Naiko tore up the account book of Patnaik and he was thrown out by the scruff of the neck. By this time Laxman's fame had spread all over Malkangiri. It came to be generally believed that he was the future king of Malkangiri.

The messianic trait, which formed an integral component of the revolt, was also associated with Lal Raja (whose real name was Moti Singh), the *naiko* of Tonguguda (in the Malkangiri police station area). He had been recruited as a four-*anna* member of the Congress around 1940. Being a village *naiko* 'he could naturally wield his influence' in the Tongaguda area. Laxman and Balaram Pujari met him at the Damapalli 'shandy' (market) on 19 August 1942 and he was sent to 'attack' the out-still liquor shop of Pushapally (in the

Malkangiri police station area). The 'crowd' composed of tribals and non-tribals (some were out-castes) 'raided' the shop at 4 p.m. on 19 August 1942. The *sahukar*, Dayanidhi, was directed to close his shop for good as British Raj had ended and *swaraj* had been set up, and no taxes or revenue would be paid. A number of articles (distillation apparatus, buckets, etc.) were destroyed, and the total loss amounted to Rs.60. when Dayanidhi interfered during this 'raid' he was physically evicted by Lal Raja. The cash box containing Re. 1 just disappeared, but later on Dayanidhi 'recovered Re. 0.1.6 out of it.'

The climax was a huge meeting organised at Mathili on 21 August, 1942. Since about 17 August, 1942, the police authorities had apprehended that this would take the form of a 'raid' on the police station at Mathili.[65] In fact, Mathili was the epicentre of a very widespread campaign which had stirred up Malkangiri and the western portion of the neighbouring Jeypore *taluk* (especially Ambaguda and Udoyogiri). What seems to have made the estate authorities and the police panic was the fear that these activities would rouse the Bondas whom they dreaded, since the latter remained comparatively isolated and were looked upon as a 'fierce', 'war-like' tribe.[66]

On 21 August, 1942 the opium shop and the Revenue Inspector's office at Mathili were 'raided'.[67] Following this a crowd of about a thousand people reached the Mathili police station at about 9.30 a.m., singing the *Ramdhun* and carrying Congress flags. It raised slogans like *Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai.* These people were stopped by the police about two hundred yards east of the police station. After an argument with the policemen, the 'crowd' withdrew to the nearby *hat* in a procession. Here, Laxman made a speech informing the audience that the British Government was gone and that Gandhi was their king. After this the 'crowd' (the numbers of which had swelled) marched enthusiastically towards the police station around 2 p.m. Laxman again made a speech here through which he expressed the collective aspirations of the 'crowd'. As he put it, Gandhi Raj had replaced British Raj and the 'shandy' and forest dues no longer had to be paid.[68] Although portrayed as a 'violent mob' the 'crowd' remained peaceful. Its basic aim was to disobey orders, have a meeting and hoist the Congress flag in the police station as a symbol of defiance, and court arrest.[69]

In the tussle that followed the police got the pretext for a *lathi*-charge and the subsequent firing. Laxman got injured during the *lathi*-charge and fell down unconscious, and it was the police firing that killed Ramayya, a forest guard, and between nine to eleven demonstrators.[70]

In the trial, the 'crowd' was termed as a 'violent mob' which wanted to burn the police station, kill the officers and loot the Malkangiri treasury. Since Laxman was looked upon as a potential threat by the estate, sections of the 'internal exploiters' as well as the colonial administration, he was singled and charged with the murder of the forest guard Ramayya. The authorities unleashed a reign of terror to smother the storm and secure witnesses. However, in spite of this the bulk of the witnesses they got were servants of the estate or the colonial administration and only nine out of the twenty-eight witnesses examined were able to say something regarding Laxman's role in the death of Ramayya.[71] Nevertheless, Laxman Naiko was given a death sentence.

As we have seen the Quit India movement assumed significant proportions in Malkangiri. That this was based on the existing *fituri* tradition and strong pressures from below (which existed even prior to the advent of the PCC into this area) needs hardly to be emphasised. What needs to be explained is the convergence of this revolt with the all-India movement which gave it a new direction in contrast to the earlier *fituris*. This needs to be located as a development based in the sharpening contradictions between colonialism and the estate vis-à-vis the people of Malkangiri. As suggested, this was due in large measure to the erosion of traditional rights and the creation of new burdens. In this latter category, the War collections played an important role. These pressures, undoubtedly, had a unifying role and linked Malkangiri (as well as the whole zamindari)[72] with Indian nationalism. At the same time, it is vital to grasp possible shifts in popular perceptions – a feature that cannot be quantified – since the theme of increased burdens was not new. The picture that one gets is that this revolt was not based on a narrow definition of nationalism as outlined by Nationalist historians[73] nor were the issues 'autonomous' and 'local' as the historians of the Subaltern school would like to paint it.[74] What we have witnessed instead is the interaction of *swaraj* with the popular level and the way each left its imprints on the other.

It is also vital to say something about the 'crowds'. The following tables throw some light on the composition of the 'crowds' that participated in the revolt:

**Table V**

**Incidents prior to the meeting at Mathili**[75]

| Sl. No. | Date | Place | Total number of personal accused | Tribals and out-castes | Non-tribals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 16.8.1942 | Badhigar | 8 | 4 | 4 |
| 2. | 17.8.1942 | Kuntipally | 27 | 23 | 4 |
| 3. | 18.8.1942 | Salimi | 26 | 21 | 5 |
| 4. | 19.8.1942 | Pushpalli | 29 | 27 | 2 |
| 5. | 23.8.1942 | Nuagaon | Details not known | | |
| 6. | Not known | Malipara | 10 | 5 | 5 |

**Table VI**

**Persons arrested in connection with the Mathili Police Station episode**

**(total 54)**[76]

| Bhumiyas | Kutias (Kandhas) | Gaudas | Paikas/Ranas | Out-castes | Others |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 36 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 6 |

**Table VII**

**Occupation:**

| Naikos | Cultivators (including Naikos) | Agricultural and non-agricultural labourers | Teacher |
|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | 45 | 8 | 1 |

What needs to be highlighted is that the unity from below contested the hierarchies of caste and also undermined the tribal/non-tribal dichotomy. An interesting incident is recounted regarding a person of Malipara (Nuagaon), a MaIi by caste, who was sent a chit which ordered him to keep food ready for two hundred 'Congressmen'. This person was affluent compared to his 'co-villagers'. Self-invited guests numbering about a hundred attended the feast. Tribals and non-tribals (including five Malis out of the ten leaders, and probably some untouchables as well) participated and invited their host to join them, threatening the latter with 'direct' polluting action when he declined their invitation.[77] Similarly, the hill-men/plains-men dichotomy does not seem to have any relevance since most of the PCC leaders like Biswasroi, Sahu and Tripathy were men from the plains.[78] Further, one also comes across the revolt uniting some *mustajars* with tenants, agricultural labourers and non-agricultural labourers. This latter phenomenon was possible because of the nature of stratification and the position of *mustajars*. Two trends converged in this revolt – the struggles against immediate exploiters (i.e. the estate, the oppressive *mustajars* and *sahukars*), and those more directly against the colonial government (for example, issues such as the tax on opium, the War contributions, etc.).

The messianic and millenarian traits of the *fituri* tradition were vital components of the revolt. The former was associated with some of the leaders of the movement like Laxman, arid Lal Raja, as well as Gandhi, who emerged as saviours by the Malkangiri folk. The convergence of the dominant myths – Laxman *raj*, Gandhi *raj* and *swaraj* – served to strengthen the revolt not only against the immediate exploiters but also against alien domination. The collapse of the British *raj* was supposed to mark the advent of a 'new age' in which there would be no oppressive taxes, and lost rights would be recovered. This notion coupled with the identification of the PCC as the most important instrument of social redress, made the crowds seek legitimacy for its actions from the Congress, even if these actions did not conform to the Congress programme.

Although various features of the revolt resembled the *fituri* tradition, the struggles in the 1938-42 phase, together with the inroads of the PCC, brought about certain changes in organization and practice. After 9 August, 1942, when the PCC, was declared illegal, the actions of the people of

Malkangiri moved closer to the *fituri* tradition. For example, the marches through the forests were very much in line with it. There was, however, little attempt at serious preparation for armed struggle. An important difference was made by the presence of the Congress and the interactions with the notion of *swaraj*, which was identified here with the re-assertion of lost rights and resisting increasing burdens.

By adjusting itself to popular pressures in the 1937-42 phase, the PCC not only increased its influence over Malkangiri, but also drew it into the all-India movement. Nevertheless, the support of the PCC imposed certain constraints on the revolt. This was chiefly due to its links with the *zamindari* after the 1937 elections were over. Moreover, the importance of the *mustajars* in the movement was a reflection of the PCC's preference for comparatively 'respectable' allies. In various places a tension developed between popular militancy and the restrained political action favoured by the PCC. The distribution of opium, eating as self-invited guests, the destruction of accounts records of *sahukars* and attempts to hit out against the barriers of caste were examples of the former. Activities relating to 'prohibition', and limited opposition to forest and excise dues, represented the other stream and was clearly associated with the PCC's propertied allies in the *zamindari*. However, the destruction of liquor shops and the distillation apparatus, as well as the records of accounts suggest a departure from Gandhian methods of boycott and picketing. What should not be overlooked is the close connection between the exploitative *sahukars* and the liquor trade, which made them obvious targets of such 'attacks'.

Consequently, what emerges is the coexistence and interpenetration of these two streams in the movement, indicating at one level the rather weak hold of the PCC over the revolt. Thus, even on the day of the Mathili firing, we come across 'raids' on the opium shop and the Revenue Inspector's office at Mathili and a symbolic defiance of the British *raj*.[79] Another feature that needs to be stressed is that although slogans against *bethi* and *goti* had been raised, our evidence does not suggest that it was an integral component of the revolt. This was because some of the Congress leaders had links with the *zamindari* or were *mustajars*, like Laxman himself. Consequently, it may be said that the association with the PCC dampened the social transformative content of the movement.

The aftermath of the revolt saw the PCC as an important force in Malkangiri. After the Mathili tragedy and Laxman's arrest a violent crowd nearly set fire to the Mathili police station. It was the intervention of Radhamohan Sahu that averted this.[80] The PCC's negotiating role, coupled with the absence of any other political alternative contributed significantly to its growing popularity. The electoral success of Radhamohan Sahu (in the 1946 Legislative Assembly elections from the Jeypore-Malkangiri constituency) symbolised how the PCC reaped the benefits of the 1942 revolt in Malkangiri.

Laxman Naiko was hanged in the Berhampur jail on 29 March, 1943. When Sadasiva Tripathy met him before his execution, Laxman had told him that he would have been much happier if he had seen *swaraj* before his death.[81] A police party which visited Tentuligumma in December, 1943 found that Laxman's relatives and co-villagers firmly believed that he was still alive in Sambalpur jail.[82] When S. Sanganna toured Malkangiri after his election to Parliament in 1952[83] a rumour circulated that Laxman had returned as a minister – a reward for his earlier contribution. People from different parts of Malkangiri came to see him, only to return disappointed.[84] The 'living' Laxman reflects the unresolved contradictions and the unfulfilled dreams of the Malkangiri folk.

* The interviews in Malkangiri and Jeypore were conducted over January and April 1981 and January-March 1982; would like to express my gratitude to all those people I have interviewed.

**References**

1 Till 1936 the Jeypore estate was a part of the Madras Presidency, after which it merged with Orissa.

2 For the *fituri* tradition see David Arnold, 'Rebellious Hillmen: The Gudem-Rampa Risings' in Ranajit Guha ed *Subaltern Studies I*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press,1982 and Murali Atlury, 'Alluri Sitarama Raju and the Manyam Rebellion of 1922-1924' in *Social Scientist*, 12:4, April 1984, 3-33.

3 N.C. Behuria, *Final Report on the Major Settlement Operations in Koraput District 1936-64*, Cuttack: Orissa Government Press, 1966, 55, 68. It seems that the estate exercised a rather strong control since the *Report on Land Administration in the Districts of Ganjam and Koraput 1938-39*, Cuttack: Orissa Government Press, 1940, stated that there was no village establishment maintained by the Government.

4 R.C.S. Bell, *Orissa District Gazetteers*: *Koraput*, Cuttack: Orissa Government Press, 1945, 137. In Behuria, *Final Report*, it is clearly mentioned that prior to 1952 all the forests were owned by the Maharaja of Jeypore; 6.

5 *Report of the Partially Excluded Areas Enquiry Committee Orissa 1940*, Cuttack: Orissa Government Press, 1940; hereafter *RPEAEC*, 17-18, 26-53.

6 *RPEAEC* 17-18. *Podu* caused a great deal of concern for the authorities, Bell, *Koraput*, 106. Unfortunately, we do not have any data on the proportion of settled/shifting cultivators. Remnants of this method of cultivation have survived up to this day in the region.

7 Behuria, *Final Report Koraput District*, 74.

8 Bell, *Koraput*, 114.

9 Bell, *Koraput*, 115. Women were paid at the rate of 2 to 3 *annas* per day; 1 *kunchum* was about 2-3 kilograms.

10 Bell, *Koraput*, 116.

11 *RPEAEC*, 49-50.

12 *RPEAEC* 43; it mentions that even *mustajars* and *naikos* recruited *gotis*, 49; Behuria, *Final Report Koraput District*, 19, notes that by the 1940s Koyas, Parojas and others from the estate migrated to the tea plantations in Assam.

13 *RPEAEC*, 53.

14 *RPEAEC* 173; Bell, *Koraput*, 114; whereas per plough the 'hill-men' paid 8 to 12 *annas*, the 'non-hill-men' paid between 8 *annas* and Rs. 2; 28.

15 Behuria, *Final Report Koraput District*, 6.

16 Nilamani Senapati and N.K.Sahu, *Gazetteers of India - Orissa*: *Koraput*, Cuttack: Orissa Government Press, 1966, 178.

17 Interview: Gopinath Pujari of Mendiculi (Mathili), who was 18-20 years old in 1942.

18 Senapati and Sahu, *Gazetteer of Koraput*, 78.

19 Senapati and Sahu, *Gazetteer of Koraput*, 229.

20 *RPEAEC*, 29.

21 Bell, *Koraput*, 116.

22 Senapati and Sahu, *Gazetteer of Koraput*, 39, 52.

23 R.C.S. Bell, *Census of India 1941, XI Orissa Tables*, Delhi: Commissioner of Census, 1942, 33.

24 This table is based on the *Report on Land Administration in the Districts of Ganjam and Koraput 1936-42,* Cuttack: Orissa Government Press, 1937-1943. It is not clear whether these included both *mustajari* and tenant lands.

25 *RPEAEC*, 43.

26 Interview with Shri Damodar Samantarai (Jeypore), who was the first person to attract my attention towards this dimension. Interview with Shri Ramaya Dhangramajhi (an associate of Laxman, of Gongla, near Mathili) and Sreemati Kausalya (Laxman's daughter, Mathili) served to cross-check the question of 'joint land'. Samantarai could not say whether the couples who were asked to leave, left permanently or not; most probably, they re-joined their relatives once they were in a position to work.

27 Confidential File on Laxman Naik (hereafter CFLN) at the Mathili police station; I am thankful to the Superintendent of Police, Koraput district, for allowing me to use this extremely valuable document.

28 Behuria, *Final Report Koraput District*, 68; David Arnold, "Rebellious Hillmen", 26-29.

29 M. Venkatarangaiya ed *The Freedom Movement in Andhra Pradesh*, Vol. 3, Hyderabad: Andhra Pradesh State Committee Appointed for the Compilation of a History of the Freedom Struggle in Andhra Pradesh, 1965, 87-88, 382.

30 Dasarathi Nanda, *Saheed Laxman Naik* (Oriya), Berhampur: Bijoy Book Store,1977, 35, refers to Laxman's contacts with the *fituri* and his *desari* traits (i.e. interest in astrology and medicine). Sumit Sarkar, 'Primitive Rebellion and Modern Nationalism: A Note on Forest Satyagraha in the Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience Movements' in *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Bhubaneshwar Session 1977* (Aligarh: Indian History Congress, 1978), 516, points to Raju wandering among tribals claiming astrological and medicinal powers. This obviously enabled him to move closer to the people.

31 To get an idea of popular responses in Koraput during the 1929-1934 phase see Biswamoy Pati, *Resisting Domination: Peasants, Tribals and the National Movement in Orissa,1920-1950*, New Delhi: Manohar, 1993, chapter 2.

32 *RPEAEC*, 56, mentioned that eleven tribes in the Koraput district were not allowed to vote in the elections under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935; this included Parojas, Kandhas, Koyas, Gadabas and Dombs (outcastes). The high property qualifications (at least Rs. 2 in rent per year) meant that a very small proportion of the people made up the electorate.

33 Balabhadra Pujari, *Saheed Bira Laxman Naik* (Oriya), Bhubaneshwar: no details of publication, 11. Pujari refers to Bidyadhar Singh Deo as the son-in-law of the Maharaja of Jeypore. However, in Government of India, Home Political, file no. 4/13/1938, National Archives of India, New Delhi (hereafter NAI), he is referred to as the Maharaja's nephew. The Utkala Sammilani had sought to unify Orissa and was a virtually spent force in this context; it was backed by the *zamindars* and some princely rulers of Orissa.

34 *Indian Annual Register* (hereafter *IAR*), July-December, 1937, 268. The result of this assurance was the Partially Excluded Areas Enquiry Committee.

35 This becomes clear if one goes through the Home Political Fortnightly Reports (hereafter HPFR), file no. 18/7/1938 and 18/9/1938 (NAI).

36 HPFR 18/11/1938 and interview: Samantarai.

37 Home Political, file no. 4/13/1938.

38 HPFR 18/10/1938.

39 RPEAEC 26.

40 HPFR 18/6/1938. it may be noted that the Bastar state had common borders with the Jeypore *taluk*. Laxman was active in the Ramgiri forest range (which was in the Jeypore *taluk*, bordering Bastar) in the 1940-41 phase.

41 HPFR 18/4/1938.

42 HPFR 18/7/1938.

43 For details Biswamoy Pati, *Identity, Hegemony, Resistance: Towards a Social History of Conversions in Orissa, 1800-2000*, New Delhi: Three Essays Collective, 2003.

44 *IAR*, July-December, Vol. II, 1942, 194.

45 HPFR 18/11/1938.

46 Interview: Samantarai; R.K. Biswasroi, *Orissa Rajaniti Eban Eka Nua Pradeshara Parikalpana* (Oriya), Jeypore: no publisher cited, 1973, 32-33, served to crosscheck this evidence.

47 HP file no. 4/13/1938.

48 B.S. Deo, *The Goti System in Jeypore Agency*, Jeypore Political and Economic Studies No. 2, Jeypore: Utkala Pathagar, 1938, 7.

49 HPFR 18/6/1939.

50 CFLN; S. Sanganna, 'Revolts in Orissa: Martyr Laxman Naik: A Hero of the Freedom Movement', in V. Raghavaiah ed *Tribal Revolts*, Nellore: Andhra Rashtra Adimajati Sevak Sangh, 1971, 249.

51 For details, Pati, *Resisting Domination*, chapter 4.

52 All India Congress Committee Private Papers, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, file no. P20/1940; Padhiary's list to the General Secretary, All India Congress Committee (8.9.1941), of the intending *satyagrahis*.

53 Sanganna, 'Revolts in Orissa', 250 and CFLN. The selection of the Ramgiri region seems to be particularly striking considering that there is a huge *mela* at Gupteshwar (in this tract) on *sivaratri*. Even today tribal as well as non-tribal people from parts of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh (both bordering the Koraput district) and the Koraput district attend it. This festival usually falls in the dry season, when it is not very difficult to move around in this forested region. Although the exact time when Laxman offered individual *satyagraha* is not known, this place was selected because of its importance as an area in which a lot of people gathered.

54 Our evidence does not indicate that Laxman campaigned against the tax on opium. The War collections increased the burdens and created the basis for a strong unity from below. Out of the twenty-two people arrested in connection with the anti-war slogans in the district there were tribals, non-tribals and out-castes; Koraput district was the leading district in the province of Orissa as regards War collections HPFR, 18/2/1941.

55 Interview: Krushna Chandra Bisoi, Jeypore.

56 Interview : Kausalya (Laxman's daughter).

57 Nanda, *Saheed Laxman Naik*, 72-76; and, Sanganna, 'Revolts in Orissa', 250.

58 CFLN and, H.K. Mahtab *et.al* eds *History of the Freedom Movement in Orissa*, Vol. IV, (Cuttack: State Committee for the Compilation of the History of the Freedom Movement in Orissa, 1957), 91.

59 Koraput Collectorate Record Room, SC (Sessions Court) No.18/1942, 'Judgement in Late Laxman Naik Case'; I am grateful to the Collector, Koraput district for allowing me to use this document.

60 Mahtab, *et.al* eds *History of the Freedom Movement*, Vol. IV, 91 point to the fact that these people were 'armed' with saplings, cudgels and *lathis*, forgetting that it is a very common practice for people to move about 'armed' in this way in the forest tracts. In Mahtab, *et.al* eds *History of the Freedom Movement* Vol. V, it is mentioned that: 'The property of Messrs H. Dear & Co. ... who had the contract for the supply of sleepers was made a target of attack'; 87.

61 This part is based on CFLN and my narration of incidents follows the sequence they are mentioned in it.

62 Patros and Bisois are mostly non-tribals.

63 Compare the role of the market-place in pre-industrial Europe; for example, G. Lefebvre, *The Great Fear of 1789: Rural Punic in Revolutionary France,* London: New Left Books, 1973, especially chapter 2. Although it is not clear, it is very likely that the 'crowd' had originated from this very *hat.* After accomplishing its mission successfully it went back to the source of its origin to share its triumph with others and then got merged with the people at the *hat.*

64 He was most probably a *kumuti.*

65 SC no. 18/1942. Behuria, *Final Report Koraput District,* describes the Mathili *hat* as one of the best attended *hats* in Malkangiri. Perhaps this was another reason which caused anxiety to the authorities.

66 Nityananda Das, 'Martyr Laxman Naik: A Hero of the Freedom Movement', *Adivasi,* IX, 1, April 1967, 24.

67 Mahtab et.al eds *History of the Freedom Movement,* Vol. V, 88.

68 SC no. 18/1942; and the Patna High Court Decision, cited by Mahtab, *et.al* eds *History of the Freedom Movement et.al* eds Vol. IV, 44-48, Appendix.

69 Das, 'Martyr Laxman Naik', 25; Sanganna, 'Revolts in Orissa', 252, mentions about the attempt to hoist the flag. In a letter signed by him Laxman mentioned how these people were eager to court arrest; cited by Pujari, *Saheed Bira Laxman,* 20. Interview: Gopinath Pujari, matched with the evidence cited.

70 Nanda, *Saheed Laxman Naik,* 93. Several people were also injured. According to CFLN, only two people died.

71 Mahtab, *et.al* eds *History of the Freedom Movement,* Vol. IV, 44-48, Appendix. For details of repression see Biswasroi, *Orissa Rajaniti,* 26. It may be worth mentioning here that the Malkangiri treasury was nearly forty-five kilometres away.

72 For details of the '42 Movement in the Jeypore zamindari see Mahtab *et.al* eds *History of the Freedom Movement,* Vols. I and V and Pati, *Resisting Domination,* chapter 4.

73 See, for example, Bipan Chandra, *Nationalism and Colonialism* in *Modern India,* New Delhi: Orient Longman,1979. As he puts it: 'Nationalism helped to arouse the peasant and awaken him to his own needs . . . Nationalism helped the peasant movement to 'stand on its feet'. " (345).

74 I have in mind here some of the contributions in the *Subaltern Studies* volumes, and even Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press,1983), who talk about the 'pure', 'unadulterated' and 'autonomous' consciousness of the common people that was fettered by features like 'territoriality'.

75 This is based on CFLN.

76 This is based on Nanda, *Saheed Laxman Naik*, 118-20.

77 CFLN.

78 This study directly contradicts Arnold, 'Rebellious Hillmen' insofar his effort to demarcate the hillmen/plainsmen dichotomy is concerned. In fact, the popularity enjoyed by the Congress leaders in Malkangiri was remarkable. Dhangramajhi started crying while describing how people felt when Radhamohan Sahu died. It may be noted here that it was not a revolt of the Kandhas alone as is suggested by Raghavaiah, in the dedication to his book; iii.

79 Mahtab *et.al* eds *History of the Freedom Movement*, Vol. V, 88.

80 Interview: Dhangramajhi.

81 Interview: Samantarai. The ruling class of Orissa has honoured Laxman by naming certain institutions in the Koraput district after him and building his statue at Mathili, which I was told, does not resemble him!

82 CFLN

83 T. Sanganna was elected as the unopposed Congress candidate from the Rayagada-Phulbani parliamentary constituency.

84 Interview: Pujari.

# Gandhian Constructive Activities in South Orissa

*Subash Chandra Padhy*

By the time Gandhi appeared in the National Movement of India, it had secured a foothold among the educated Indians. The movement had two streams (i) The constitutional agitation or the politics of mendicancy (ii) The underground revolutionary movement known as terrorism. The first was limited to the educated upper middle class while the second was confined to the middle and lower middle class. But, Gandhi with his new technique, transformed the movement into an authentic broad-based mass movement.

The period from 1920 to 1947 which is known as Gandhian era can be divided into two periods. (i) The period of Mass Action which include Non-cooperation Movement (1920-1922), Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-34) and Quit India Movement (1942), (ii) The period of constructive works during the interim period i.e. 1923 to 1929, 1935 to 1941 and 1943 to 1947. While the first period is marked as Mass Movement, the second can be termed as Non Mass Movement.[1] The period of Non Mass Movement or the period of constructive works helped indirectly to promote mass mobilization at the grass root level. This has been also placed as a period of struggle-truce-struggle during Gandhian era of National Movement.[2] Gandhi said, "Every one should do some constructive work over and above the parliamentary work. And the aim of Parliamentary work should also be to advance constructive work".[3]

Before the emergence of Gandhian era, the early Congress movement could not pay any attention to social programmes. They might have thought that the social questions varied from one community to another or from one religion to another.[4] But, it was Gandhi who for the first time took up the cause of social regeneration as an integral part of the congress programme of National Movement. The constructive programme was devised to reform the national character. He said that a reformed India would be a free India.[5] In 1920 Gandhi announced a fourfold programme such as:[6] (i) Universal production and use of Khadi through Universal hand-spinning; (ii) Hindu-Muslim Communal Unity; (iii) Promotion of total prohibition by propaganda; (iv) Removal of Untouchability;

By adhering to the constructive programmes, Gandhi believed that the following objectives could be achieved.[7] They are: (i) The masses could gain an idea of exploitation, free social and economic order; (ii) It would generate the self reliance and internal cohesions which can be useful for nonviolence struggle; (iii) It would give power in long-drawn struggle; (iv) A bond of trust can be created between the active civil resister and average citizen through constructive work pursued continuously in peace time.

**Implementation of Constructive Programme in Orissa**

In between 1921 and 1946, Gandhi visited Orissa eight times. During those visits, he had spent sixty nine days in Orissa.[8] He had taken *padajatra* only twice, first in Orissa and second in Noakhali in 1947. He began his *padayatra* from Puri on 9th May and reached Bhadrak on 8th June and then he went to Wardha. Orissa having a host of stunch Gandhian followers who came forward to organise work centres at Puri, Bari, Champapur and Bhadrak. In western and southern part of Orissa also Gandhian Ashrams were established which started functioning. In this paper an attempt has been made to give a brief description of constructive programmes in southern part of Orissa (Ganjam and Koraput) which was a part of Madras Presidency till 1936.

**Ganjam and Constructive Programmes**

Gobara is a village near Bhanjanagar had nearly two hundred twenty families including forty Harijan families by 1934. On 26th January 1934, a Gram Sevak Sangha was started with ten young men with a monthly subscription of one paisa. The number of members increased to eighteen by 1935.[9] They also collected donations from the market and opened a free dispensary in the village. The members used to take out a *kirtan* party every morning in the localities of the Hindus and the Harijans. All the members were given training in *Yoga*. Pursusotam Pattnaik was the secretary of Gobara Harijan Sangha and Gobara Gram Sevak Sangha.[10]

Similarly Telugu Harijan Seva Sangha was established in the Barua Village with the purpose of educating common illiterate people. An adult education centre and library were also started there.[11]

Niranjan Pattnaik, a staunch population leader of the early congress movement, made special efforts for promotion of Khadi and Gramodyog (village industry). Much before Gandhi's *padayatra* in Orissa, he had educated the Gandhian philosophy at Berhampur.[12] His wife Kishorimani Devi was taking keen interest in working out Gandhian Constrictive programmes among the women folk in Ganjam district. Niranjan's proximity to Gandhi can be realized from the letter of Gandhi on 4th November, 1934. He wrote, "--- the constitution of Indian National congress as amended should enable a good worker to make solid progress in working the congress along right lines. If you have any suggestion to make in connection with the village industries Association which is in the process of formation, please do".[13]

Niranjan served as the manager of Orissa branch of All India Charakha Association. He established khadi centres at Kodala, Boirani and Samakhandi.[14] Jamunalal Bajaj, the president of All India Spinner's Association visited Aska, Kodala, Berhampur in April 1927 and spread the Khadi Movement which became popular.[15]

In Berhampur, a Harijan Sangha was started by Mohan Nayak assisted by his brother Demodar Nayak in 1938. The Sangha organized meetings and created awareness for removal of superstitions and social dogmas.[16] On October 2nd, 1938 he inaugurated a handwritten fortnightly magazine '*Harijan*'. It highlighted the problems of the Harijans. The subscribers of this magazine were the teachers of Mrudingia Sahi of Berhampur, Harijans of Boirani (Now Kavisuryanagar), Harijans living in Arambazar of Calcutta, Patitapaban Sangha of Kharagpur, Harijans of Ichapur and Pitala. However Mohan Nayak was arrested for publication of the magazine.[17]

In 1932, Champa Devi of Dura village started a Ashram for the destitutes, orphan girls, divorcees and socially downtrodden girls at Ichapur. She was influenced by Bairagi Mishra of Cuttack who used to conduct sacred thread ceremony for donation of one anna and a marriage for one rupee and also organized widow remarriages.[18] Being inspired by Sarala Devi, Kuntala Kumari and Rama Devi, she opened the doors of her Asharam for all and propagated against social evils like drinking etc.[19]

Influenced by this Gandhian ideology Srimati Suryamma, the wife of the freedom fighter master Saneya used to visit regularly Harijan families and helped them in various ways.[20]

The Utkal Sadan Ashram organized regular meetings of the workers of the Sumandi Salt factory and they were asked to give up liquor and to boycott foreign clothes as well as British Courts.[21]

There are references to the influence of Patitapaban Mission Association in many areas of Ganjam particularly on Harijans.[22] The Promoters of the association Jayamangal Rath, Antaryami Behera, Kumuduni Devi organized the Dandashis, Sundhies and Kaibartas of Ganjam for the welfare programmes like formation of cooperative societies, anti untouchability and anti liquor campaigns amongst them.

The Utkal Swaraj Ashram at Berhampur played the active role in propagating the nationalist programme such as boycott of foreign clothes, spread of Khadi work.[23]

**Constructive Programmes and Koraput**

The District Congress Committee of Koraput under its president Radha Krushna Biswasray organized different training centres for the tribals. A centre was started at Nuaput near Jeypore on 6th November, 1938.[24] Arrangements were also made for spinning 'khadi' and other related constructive works. As many as three hundred fifty persons of the depressed class took training there.[25] The senior Gandhian leaders like Gopabandhu Choudhury, Acharya Harihara Das Godavarish Mishra and Gokulananda Mohanty used to visit these camps and stayed with them. The tribal leader of Koraput, Lakhman Naik had also taken the training.[26]

The trainees received valuable training in cotton cultivation, hand weaving and utilities of Khadar. The slogan for the workers was 'spin your own cloth and husk your own food staff'. The spinning wheel for them was the Sudarshan Chakra, the wheel of god and they had a firm belief that it would ultimately bring them freedom from bondage.[27]

The young trainees were also given training in village welfare. They took welfare activities to different villages, cleared village tanks, drains, constructed roads, planted trees and mass prayer was an integral part of the trainees.[28] They were taught the Gandhian Philosophy and developed a code of conduct which included (i) Faith in God (ii) Non-Violence (iii) Total Prohibition (iv)Celibacy (v) Not to hoard food more than necessary (vi) Physical labour (vii) Humility (viii)Fearlessness (ix) use of Swadeshi goods (x) Giving up sensuality (xi) Abolition of caste system.[29] These trainees acted as the coordinators between the congress and villagers.

The tribals were not able to understand the concept of constructive programmes as the Non tribals. So in Koraput many innovative methods were adopted. Such as

(i) In 1937, there was a proposal for appointment of Gandhi gumastas for every twenty five villages to whom the villagers could report their grievances.[30] The mobilization of tribals was facilitated by the circulation of brief letters drafted by Gandhi gumastas.

(ii) A Gandhian Khotali (a small wooden apparatus on which an image of Gandhi was kept) was carried from one village to another in the entire district. People used to offer worship to that Khotali. The purpose was to indoctrinate them with Gandhian Philosophy.[31]

(iii) A pamphlet was issued by the congress activists in Nawrangpur asking tribals to observe certain practices such as: (i) One must pray god to give him wisdom to do good to the people. (ii) To take bath early in the morning, clean teeth with charcoal, wash hands etc. (iii) To spin khaddar, wear khaddar as per rule of Congress (iv) Not to sow seeds in another's land by force (v) Not to quarrel (vi) Must renew the congress membership every year (vii) Not to take wine, opium (viii) Not to kill cows, buffaloes during festivals and be kind to the animals. These observances gave some amount of moralistic preaching and helped the Gandhian movement through constructive programmes.

(iv) The anti liquor campaign was a major programme. This had more relevance in Koraput where the tribals were more used for alcoholic drinks. The Kandhs at Narayana Patna (Now in Rayagada District) gathered for the Thakurani festival and offered Mandia Jau (Preparation like barely) instead of liquor as a result of this programme.

(v) There was a temple entry attempt by Harijans in Vikrampur and Nawrangpur in September 1938.[32] This shows the impact of Gandhian constructive programme of untouchability in these areas.

The above discussions present a synoptic presentation of a micro level activities during Gandhian struggle of Indian National Movement in South Orissa. The political agitational work adopted through the strategy of constructive activities organized around the promotion of Khadi, national education, boycott of foreign clothes and liquor, the social upliftment of harijans and struggle against untouchablity, formation of Ashrams, Panchayats, Sevadals and Training centres led to the broadening of popular mass participation. These initiatives over the period helped to spread the nationalist ideology on a mass level and thus weakened the hold of colonial ideology.

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# Spread of Modern Education in South Orissa under British Rule

*Bina Kumari Sarma*

Education was in a state of decline on the eve of introduction of British rule in South Orissa in 1766.[1] Prior to that under the Muslim rule we do not find any evidence supporting the growth of an organised system of education. The sphere of government's activity more or less was confined to collection of revenue, maintenance of military force, suppression of rebellion and expansion of territory. Little patronage that helped the growth of education literature in South Orissa, at that time, came from the old landed nobility and few other liberal rulers, whereas the vast mass of people who had no learning in its formal sense remained illiterate and uneducated. The general backwardness of the Oriyas in the matter of education is proved by the statement of W.W. Hunter who wrote, "Throughout the length and breadth of the province all was darkness and superstition. Anyone who could write a sentence or two on a palm leaf was taken to be a literate man".[2] In case of South Orissa, it is further corroborated by Maltby who has stated, "the Oriyas are unintelligent, lazy and unenterprising men as compared with the other inhabitants of the Madras Presidency". Further he wrote, "they are not an education loving people. The better class, out of as they say, intense love for their children let them please themselves at the very time they should be at school and a well educated Uriya is a rarity".[3]

In South Orissa, before the advent of the British a sort of education prevailed which gave primary education to the students in Chatasalis or Pathasalas by the *Abadhanas* or the village school masters.[4] The educational system mainly depended upon charitable endowments. There were no school buildings, no trained or qualified teachers, no syllabi, no printed books, not even manuscripts for the study of the students. However, the British government did not recognize the promotion of education among the natives of South Orissa as a part of its duty or concern. "The rulers", observes Monier William "feared the evil consequences of education for the ruled and the ruled anticipated no good results for themselves".[5] Under that situation the Christian Missionaries took to themselves the responsibility of educating the masses.

**Contribution of Christian Missionaries**

The foundation of modern educational system in South Orissa during early 19th century was laid mainly by the Christian missionaries. In fact, the role played by the Christian missionaries who came to preach their religion by establishing educational institutions in backward regions of South Orissa during the 19th century cannot be minimized. Being the pioneers of modern education as elsewhere in India, the missionaries of various denominations,[6] in South Orissa made efforts beyond the traditional system of education and opened educational institutions during the first quarter of 19th century. They worked for the promotion of learning in both vernacular and English languages and literature.[7]

In 1813, William Lee, a missionary of the London Mission Society had set up a Christian school at Ganjam with thirty students and four teachers.[8] In course of time the missionaries set up a number of schools at Ganjam and Vizagapatnam Agency of South Orissa under Madras Presidency.[9] In 1837, the General Baptist Mission started a school at Berhampur with eighteen destitute children. In 1840 at Berhampur and in 1841 at Ganjam they opened two orphanages. Schools and orphanages ever since that time continued to be established. In fact, in such schools rescued 'meriahs' (human beings kept for sacrifice by the Khonds) and famine orphans with other poor children, male and female were admitted in hundreds of numbers. Both religious and elementary secular training was given to the children. Their courses of studies consisted of reading, writing, geography and history. The boys were taught to earn their living as mechanics, writers, farmers and even as domestic servants. Girls were given domestic training for becoming suitable housewives. Apart from that they were also trained in knitting, stitching, crochet lace making etc. to enable themselves to earn something thereby.[10]

When the headquarters of the Roman Catholic mission was shifted to Sorada in 1857 from Berhampur, a school was set up there for providing education to the rescued orphans and poor children. The girls were given education separately under the care of a sister. The first primary school for the boys of Catholic Mission was started at Sorada sometime in 1880-81.[11]

Until 1866 there was not a single school in the Vizagapatnam Agency. There were very few elementary schools started by the British government in urban areas like Jeypore, Kotpad, Nowrangpur and Koraput.[12] In the rural

areas, there was not a single school of any kind and majority of the people thus were illiterate.[13] Under this situation the Schleswig Holstein Evangelicals Lutheran (SHEL) Mission opened their centres and started their activities in Jeypore in 1886-87 and in Nowrangpur in 1889.[14]

At first primary schools and later on other educational institutions were taken up by the Church. In 1892 a small mission Elementary School was opened at Jeypore. In 1898 a mud house, for serving both the purpose of worshipping and schooling, had been started at Nowrangpur. On 2nd April 1901, a small school at Kotpad with four orphan boys was opened by the first Missionary Rev. Timm.[15] At that time also there was a government Elementary School at Kotpad, but it did not allow the lower caste and Christian children. By 1905 there were fourteen small schools within the jurisdiction of Nowrangpur mission station.[16]

A training school for masters of the Elementary and Higher Elementary grade was started by the Missionaries at Jeypore to train Christian masters in sufficient numbers for the whole of Jeypore. However, the outbreak of the First World War compelled the Mission to handover this institution to the government.[17]

To impart education and training in industrial technology to the natives of South Orissa, the missionaries opened Industrial Schools at various places. The first was opened at Berhampur in 1904.[18] There the pupils were trained in carpentry and needle work. In 1903 an Industrial School was established at Koraput, where carpentry, iron work, pottery and weaving were taught. It was run by the Lutheran Missionaries. They also opened a carpentry school at Kotpad. Moreover a Credit Bank was organised by them to provide money to the weavers and cultivators.[19]

Similarly, the Roman Catholic missionaries had started many Technical Training Centres in different parts of Orissa. Under Berhampur Diocese, training centres were opened at Berhampur, Sorada, Bhawanipatna and Muniguda.[20]

Apart from all this, the Baptist and the Roman Catholic Missions did their best to the extent possible in spreading the light of education and civilization among the tribals of South Orissa.[21]

Above all the Christian Missionaries working in the Ganjam and Vizagapatam Agency adopted various methods to encourage mass education in South Orissa. For example at Jeypore a supervisor was appointed to tour the whole area to give advise to those who instruct and create interest among the villagers for education. Also, the church worker were asked to conduct congrational schools to instruct at least for 02 hours a day to the Christian and non-Christians children.[22] In fact the plan met with an encouraging response, particularly in Nowrangpur where people began to realize the value of education. As a result of the tireless efforts of the Missionaries at Koraput in particular, a number of students went to the college. The first young man graduated in 1937 was followed by others in B.E.D, B.D etc. and some were sent to Balasore to receive training for opening Technical Schools at Koraput.

On the whole by 1939, (before the out break of the second world war) there were 08 Higher Elementary schools (or middle vernacular schools) and 356 Elementary schools in the district of Koraput. Out of these schools 06 Higher Elementary schools and 144 Elementary schools were managed by the Taluk Board and 02 Higher Elementary schools and 43 Elementary schools were managed by the mission, chiefly by SHEL Mission. [23] Besides the above 43 aided schools, there were 37 non-aided Elementary schools under the church. Out of these two Higher Elementary Schools, one was the Katpad Mission Girls' Higher Elementary School and the other was Jeypore Mission Boys' Higher Elementary School and the later was shifted to Nowrangpur in the year 1938.

Despite all their efforts, the Christian Missionaries could not contribute much for the intellectual progress and development of South Orissa. Due to lack of interest in education on the part of parents and children, inadequate number of trained teachers, scarcity of printed books and funds, much progress could not be achieved. And the most important factor was the evangelical spirit and the inner motive of the missionaries i.e. conversion. Therefore, their activities mostly remained confined to the lower classes of society and the upper classes did not appreciate it and remained indifferent and hostile to the idea of education, which was actually means of religious conversion.

Despite all this, the contribution of the Missionaries for the beginning of modern education in South Orissa was remarkable. Through their pioneering activities, they not only introduced modern education and educated the masses

but also opened the eyes of the British Govt. towards their sense of responsibility. They exerted pressure on it to encourage and promote education which had been badly neglected.

**Government Policy and Efforts**

Initially, as has already been mentioned, the Government did not take any step for the instruction of the public of that region in modern lines. Instead of opening model schools and providing modern education to the people, it encouraged the existing Chatasalas operated by Abadhanas to continue.[24] The efforts of the Government to start native schools was very slow. Most of the schools were supported by native contributions and the payment to the teachers was not fixed.[25] The teachers were usually *Sastris* and were mostly Telugu Brahmins. Paucity of qualified teachers and irregularities in payment were responsible for the slow progress of education during the early years of British rule in South Orissa.[26] However gradually the government realized that promotion of education was a part of its responsibility and thereafter became the principal agent for the spread of new system of education in South Orissa. The government reviewed education in different perspectives and tried to modernize it.

At the outset, during the beginning of 19th century, the Oriya speaking areas under Madras Presidency were benefited by the policy of Thomas Munro, the then Governor of Madras. He encouraged the establishment of Elementary Schools in vernacular known as "Tahasildari Schools".[27] He urged, "if we resolve to educate the people, if we preserve our designs and if we do not limit the schools to Tahasildaries but increase their number so as to allow them to smaller districts, I am confident that success will ultimately attend our endeavours".[28] Accordingly a number of schools were opened in Southern Orissa. The three Tahasildari schools first opened in Ganjam were at Berhampur, Ichhapur and Chicacole. The school at Berhampur was an Oriya school and the other two were Telugu schools. The students reading at Berhampur were 276 in numbers on 1st July, 1834. It was also decided that the teachers at the Collectorate would be paid Rs.15/- and the Tahasildaris Rs.9/- per year.[29] However, by that time there were no such schools run by Government in Koraput.

By the middle of 19th century, the Government took steps to supervise education and intensified its efforts. From humanitarian point of view the government opened six schools in Ganjam in 1851 to eradicate human sacrifice in the Ganjam agency tracts. They were at Chinakhemundi, Kurmingia, Udayagiri, Mahasingi and two schools in Ghumsur. But as the attendance in the schools was not encouraging, after three years, in 1854 some of those had to be closed.

The Onslow Institution of Chhatrapur, one of the oldest schools in the state of Orissa was established in 1855 privately by Arthur Polley Onslow, the Collector of Ganjam in memory of his wife R.R. Onslow.[30] The Madras Government also opened some vernacular schools at Russelkonda and Berhampur in 1855 depending upon the Orissa division for supply of books and teachers.

But still then there were only five government schools functioning in the district such as at Purushottampur, Ganjam, Russelkonda, Ichhapur and Tekkali by 1867-68.[31] There was one government managed Zilla School at Berhampur.

In Ganjam, the Madras Government for the creation of a class of efficient teachers for government vernacular schools opened some Normal Schools. This was originally meant for hill schools of Ganjam and that was first started at Berhampur Zilla School and after some time was shifted to Russelkonda (Bhanjanagar) in 1860.[32] In 1886, the Government sanctioned for the establishment of Normal Schools, for one year each, at the centres like Rayagada, Jeypore and Gunupur in succession.[33]

However, by the year 1878, there was not a single college in South Orissa to cater to the need of the students for higher studies. The belated effort of the Government to promote higher education in Orissa remained confined to the establishment of one major educational institution in south Orissa, i.e. the Khallikote College.[34] In 1893, the Junior college under local management was on the verge of being closed down due to financial problems. At that time due to patronization and liberal donation of Late Hari Hara Mardaraj Deo, the ruler of Khallikote, the college could survive. This premier college had its origin in 1856 as a Zilla School entirely under the management of the Government. It continued as a High School until 1878 when F.A. Classes were added and thus the status of the school was raised to that of an Intermediate college.[35]

As has already been mentioned, in 1866 there was not a single school in the Vizagapatam agency corresponding roughly to the present Koraput district. Immediately after their arrival, the Government opened a school at Jeypore. But they could not maintain it longer as the school master due to bad climate died and the school was closed down. Later-on, two schools were opened at Gunupur and Koraput. By the year 1895, there were 120 schools in the Agency under the charge of Assistant Agents at Koraput and Parvathipuram with 2,551 students.[36]

Little attention which was quite negligible was given to the education of women in the pre-British days in South Orissa as elsewhere in India. During the British period, however, a beginning was made in the field. In the field of women education also the earliest effort was made by the Christian Missionaries. In fact, the beginning which they made to impart education to the girls of Christian converts and famine destitutes encouraged them consequently to devote their attention to the education of non-Christian girls. But the government adopted very careful and calculated steps in this matter and established girls educational institutions as and when there was a public consent and demand for the same.[37] After 1956, the government sanctioned for the establishment of 04 schools at Ghumsur area. By the beginning of 20th Century, there were two Primary schools especially meant for girls in the whole district. Subsequently two High schools were also established for them at Berhampur and Paralakhemundi.[38]

Apart from all this, prior to 1850 the Madras Government had established some elementary schools in the hill tracts of Ganjam to civilize the tribal people. It was found that by 1882 in the 15 schools of the Kondh region, 902 boys and 103 girls were studying. Interestingly, at Udayagiri, a Kondh Head Master was teaching the students. Efforts were also made by the Madras Government to impart education to the tribals in some other areas. For improving the schools in the Agency tract of Vizagapatam (Jeypore Zamindary) proposals were made by the Inspector of the first division, Madras.

However, the efforts made by the Government could not achieve success in educating the tribals to the desired extent due to their isolation, aversion to education, superstition and blind beliefs.[39] Therefore J.C. Molany, the Special Assistant Agent, Baligurha division had suggested some measures such as grant of a few kondh scholarship, half a day school and jobs to educate kondh for the promotion of education among the tribals of South Orissa.

**Role of Private Enterprise**

Even though the people of South Orissa did not like and cooperate with the new educational system in the beginning, gradually there was a change on demand for modern education. The hill Chieftains and the Zamindars of South Orissa at first did not encourage education. But in course of time, they gave great support and even established modern educational institutions. Among those, the contributions of the royal family of Paralakhemundi for the spread of modern education in South Orissa is significant. The rulers of Paralakhemundi considered it their prime responsibility to patronise education in their estate. In 1857, a Primary grade school was established which as developed into M.E. school in 1878 and further upgraded to the Maharaja's Boys' High School in 1884. It was finally raised to a second grade College under Madras University. The College had the distinction of having eminent professors from London, Calcutta and Madras in 1896.[40] The Maharaja also provided a hostel attached to the college for the students.

Besides all this, Gourachandra Gajapati Narayan Deb established two Girls' High School and a Sanskrit Patha Sala.[41] Not only royal patronage was provided for the establishment of modern educational institutions, but also steps were taken for the publication of books. With the establishment of the Gajapati Press in 1890 by Sri Gourachandra Gajapati Narayan Deb a number of books were published in Oriya. That was indeed a great step in the spread of Orissa education because till then the Telugus argued for the abolition of Oriya language on the ground of scarcity of text books in Oriya.

Also the contribution of the Khallikot Raj family particularly of Raja Ramchandra Mardaraj Deo towards the spread of modern education in Ganjam is most remarkable. Through the "Khollikot Educational Trust" founded by the Raja, a number of educational institutions were established in the hook and corner of the district. Some of the earliest institutions founded by the Raja are Khallikot College, Berhampur, RCM Science College Khollikot, Science College, Hinjilicut, Mardraj High School, Khallikot, Kanak Manjari High School, Khallikot and Training School at Berhampur.[42]

During the first quarter of 20th Century, it was found that there was an increasing awareness among the Oriya for receiving education, more particularly after 1915 as a result of Anata Mishra's, (An active member of

Utkal Sammillani) campaigning programme in the outlying Oriya speaking tracts. Prior to this, in 1907 the "Ganjam students fund" was set up to fight backwardness in education of the Ganjam Oriyas through private enterprise.[43] On behalf of the fund, the Committee members made an appeal in "Asha" for more donations to the fund.[44] In the fifth session of Utkal Union Conference, 1908, the Raja of Badakhemundi and Sribaatsa Panda donated Rs.1600/- for the development of women's education.[45]

Due to individual and combined efforts of the above mentioned agents, education in South Orissa by the end of 19th Century had taken a great stride. By the end of 19th century two colleges one at Berhampur and the other at Paralakhemundi, affiliated to the Madras University, 80 important zilla schools, and 100 Taluk schools were there in Gajam district.

The Ganjam district being under direct government administration for a long time had greater benefit of education than some other Oriya speaking tracts under Madras Presidency. In order to improve education in the Agency tract of Ganjam and Vizigapatam a Conference was held on 7th January 1905 at Chhatrapur, Ganjam to suggest means and methods. The government approved the following recommendations: instruction to hill tribes in their mother tongue, evening classes for adults, liberalization of grants-in-aid rules, rewards for regular attendance in schools, preference to men taught in the hill schools in employment and introduction of manual training.[46]

**Problems of Development**

Despite all these developments in the field of education in South Orissa under British rule the problems remained more conspicuous than prospects. In comparison to Orissa division (North Orissa) and the other district under Madras Presidency South Orissa lagged far behind in the matter of education till independence. The percentage of literacy in the Ganjam district was 16.2 in the year 1951. The percentage of literates among males was 28.9 and among females it was only 4.8. In the Koraput district the percentage of literacy by the same year was only 5.34. The percentage of male literacy was 9.17 and female literacy was 1.47 percent (ODG, Ganjam and Korpaut)

The progress of modern education in the Oriya speaking areas under Ganjam and Vizagapatam agency in South Orissa was quite unsatisfactory relatively when the population of the region is taken into consideration. Several

factors contributed for the slow progress of education in South Orissa during the British period. Partly, it was inevitable under the circumstances as majority of the population composed of aboriginal tribes, vast areas of the region in forest and hilly belts were inaccessible and climate wise most unsuitable and above all people had apathy towards modern education and administration. But whatever may be the historical, geographical reasons, it can not be denied that the most important factor responsible for the educational backwardness of the people as well as the general progress of the province was the territorial dismemberment of Orissa. In the process of this vivisection, South Orissa formed a mere appendage in a corner of Madras Presidency. It was inevitable and natural that very little attention was paid to her problems. For example, Madras Oriyas though occupied the fourth place in number in the Presidency and the Ghumsur division in the Ganjam district provided one third of the total revenue of the district, she got the first High School as late as 1915.[47] Even when the Madras Government made efforts to deal with Oriya problems, the G.O's (Government Orders) were not effective due to the persistent influence and hostility of the local officials (mostly Telugu and Tamils) in Ganjam and Vizagapatam Agency.

The general education in South Orissa was mostly in Telugu medium. Inspite of the fact that she had a rich cultural and literary heritage,[48] her language and education remained a relatively neglected issue for a long time. It is to be regretted that Oriya language had not been recognized by the University of Madras in its affiliated institutions till 1873.[49] Even after that it was not taught in right earnst because of the indifference of the Telugu teachers and officers. Later on the Director of Public Instruction of Madras suggested to the Government of Madras to abolish Oriya from the University examination. He stated that Oriya was a semi-barbarous language and a few Oriya books that were available were completely useless in comparison to the Telugu Text books which are quite beneficial.[50] Consequently the use of Oriya in the University examinations was discontinued. The Oriyas in Ganjam believed that their slow progress in education was due to the Telugu teachers, because teachers in the higher class schools were mainly Telugus. For example in the Khallikote College there was only one Oriya teacher and the Managing Committee consisted of mainly Telugus. The teachers as did not know Oriya could not use that language in explaining subject to the students.[51] Though in the Madras Oriya tracts, Oriya has been recognized as the language to be used in the teaching of non-language subjects in middle English schools, but serious

difficulties were experienced in regard to interchange of ideas between the teachers and the taught as majority of the teachers were Telugu. In fact, the study of Oriya was neglected to such an extent that in some parts of Ganjam Oriya boys were forced to learn Telugu in place of their mother tongue. In this context the Indian Patriot wrote: "------either let the Oriyas be taught by Oriya teachers so that they may rapidly be understood and develop or the Oriyas must be distinctly told that their language is dead.....This is what Germany did to Poland. But the slow strangulation of the Oriyas which we see at present is without parallel. We hope that Lord Pentland to whom appeal has been made in educational matters will remove for ever this axe at the very root of Oriya advancement".[52]

Though South Orissa was annexed in 1766, Ganjam got the first English school as late as 1858,[53] whereas a University had already been set up at Madras in 1857. The spread of Oriya Primary education was also very meagre in comparison to other parts, particularly in the southern tracts of Ganjam district and Vizagapatam Agency where many villages were without Oriya schools. There was also an utter lack of facilities for the Oriyas with regard to their secondary education. Secondary education in fact in the outlying Oriya tracts was very meagerly provided. In the Madras Oriya tracts for example there were not more than two High Schools for Oriya boys by 1915. Further, for an area of about 20, 000 square miles with an aggregate population of about 21/2 millions in these tracts there were not more than eight recognized High Schools in 1920.[54]

In the matter of collegiate and higher education, there were only two colleges till independence in the Ganjam district. But because of inadequate number of High schools for Oriyas in the district even those two colleges were not sufficiently useful to the community. The Khallikote College which started as an Intermediate College in 1878 could be upgraded to a Degree college after 50 years i.e. in 1944 and classes for Bachelor of Science was started not before 1945.[55]

Moreover, the Madras government was also very indifferent to the special needs of the Oriya population of South in matters of technical education.[56] There was absolutely no provision for instruction in that line in the Oriya tracts. As a result, the Oriya students had to go to distant places outside Orissa such as Calcutta, Vizagapatam, Rajmundry, Madras etc. for studying Law, Engineering, Veterinary, Agricultural Science etc.[57]

It was difficult for Oriya students to go to Madras and other places for higher studies due to distance and expense. Even there was much difficulty in getting admission and accommodation.[58] They had also difficulty in getting admission to Ravenshaw College at Cuttack because the curriculum there differed from that of the Madras University. Moreover they were not permitted to hold Bihar-Orissa scholarship, nor the Degrees from Cuttack institutions were considered equal to those of Madras. It was not easy for them with those degrees to get employment in competition with Madras passed students. [59] In fact the situation in employment for South Orissa people was similar to the state of affairs of education. It was estimated that in 1890 out of the 2000 public appointments in Ganjam only village school mastership and hill constabulary were given to the Oriyas.[60] Whereas Telugus held almost all the important positions in revenue offices, local bodies, union panchayats, municipalities and District Boards. In the administrative set up, the non Oriya intermediaries exploited the situation always to their advantage. In Aska and in Ghumsur division, we have instances when the government made efforts to establish an Oriya school or for the appointment Oriya teachers which was always negated due to the influence of Telugu members in the Taluk and district Board and S.I. Office.[61]

Above all, there were no text books in Oriya for non-language subjects till 1924.[62] Primers in elementary schools were adopted from Bihar and Orissa for Madras Oriya school children. Even the maps were inadequate and incorrect. For example, the map of Ganjam district supplied to the Oriya Board Schools and shown to the students had the place names rendered into fantastic Oriya.[63]

In all matters of administration, most especially education, no part of Madras Presidency received so scant an attention from the Government as South Orissa. Though the Oriyas constituted overwhelming majority of the population in South Orissa, they formed insignificant minority in Northern Sircar, where the Telugus were in a greater majority. It was therefore quite natural that the Oriyas languished in every sphere under the Telugu domination. In course of time, the Oriyas of South Orissa became conscious of their present gradation and future problems in matters of education, language and culture and started an agitation, constantly demanding the merger of South Orissa with the main Orissa division since the beginning of 20th century. At last

after many hurdles and much struggle the aspirations of the people of South Orissa was fulfilled by the amalgamation of the Oriya speaking tracts of Ganjam and Jeypore Agency with Orissa on 1st April 1936.

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# Anti Colonial Movement in South Orissa: A Study on Ghumsur Rebellion

*Bishnu Prasad Panda*

Like many other factors, geography is also a major determinant in history. It is therefore interesting to record the history of events that have been guided by the influence of climate and geographical location. Accordingly the history of a region is shaped. In each state or region the historical development influences within a definite geography. Therefore, the North and the South and the East and the West have always differed in their historical character. Politically Orissa is one province, no doubt, but like a prism, it has three sides of its own such as North, South and Central, emitting colours that smack of significant differences from each other. The History, Culture, Art and Architecture of South Orissa has a separate identity and occupies a prominent status in Orissa. Southern part of Orissa seems to be lucky for the Britishers as they entered India from the Southern side and ruled this country for a long time, similarly they entered Orissa from the Southern side.

The southern portions of present day Orissa comprising of Ganjam, Gajapati, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Koraput, Nawrangpur and Malkangiri were included in Madras Presidency during the British rule.

In the early stage of establishment of British rule, they had to encounter stiff resistance. In Southern Orissa too, which was occupied by the British after defeating the French in 1759. There was resistance movements in the Zamindaries of Paralakhemundi and Ghumsur and both the Zamindaries challenged the British authorities being backed by the local feudal aristocrats and their tribal followers. In Paralakhemundi, Raja Narayan Deb revolted, supported by the hill chiefs, called bissoyes and their Savara retainers as early as sixties of eighteenth century. In this region, for long seventy years disturbances occurred from time to time because of the British authorities insistence on regular payment of revenue and because of reduction of the privileges of the zamindar under Permanent Settlement. In Ghumsur, being unable to pay the tributes, Raja Dhananjay Bhanja revolted against the British authorities in 1836, although ostensibly he claimed to be fighting for the hereditary rights, status and powers of himself as well as the local aristocrats.

Here, an attempt has been made to discuss the causes of Anti-Colonial movement, course of action and establishment of peace in Ghumsur by the British authorities.

The history of Anti-Colonial movement in Ghumsur is full of many thrilling events. It is a story of the most amazing and inspiring heroism of the Rajas and their people. Much before other parts of India had raised any standard of resistance against the foreign rule, the Rajas and the people of Ghumsur had put up a great heroic struggle against the foreign rule. Ghumsur was perhaps the first territory in the whole landscape of the Indian struggle for freedom to maintain a continuous struggle against the French Rule (1753-1759) the British Raj (1766-1866) for more than a century, the like of which is rarely seen or heard of elsewhere in the country.

The Anti-colonial movement in Ghumsur can be divided into two phases, Early phase and Later phase. In the earlier phases the Rajas resisted the British authority from 1753-1853. In the later phases the kondhs i.e. the local people with their leader resisted the British occupation of Ghumsur from 1836-1866. The challenge of local people was very serious. Right from the time of imposition of the British paramountcy over Ghumsur in 1766, there had been ceaseless struggle, resistances and unrest in the zamindari. The main object of the British was to collect tribute from the Rajas by using pressure, force and coercion as and when required from time to time. The Rajas continuous put resistance against the company's authority in defense of their hereditary rights, status and power. The aboriginal khonds of the hill tracts also raised the banner of resistance in favour of their tribal leaders in support of their freedom, religion and rites. Thus, these revolts against the alien rule were sometimes under the leadership of their Rajas and some times under that of the tribal chiefs and popular leaders. Infact, it was a multidimensional struggle in which all groups of native people including the Rajas, tribals and the non-tribal people participated

**Annexation of South Orissa by East Indian Company**

In 1752, Chicacole along with South Orissa was given by Salabat Jang, the Nizam of Hyderabad to the French Company as a gift for placing him on the throne.[1] De Bussy, the top most French official was given in charge of South Orissa who had proceeded to South Orissa upto Ghumsur to maintain law and order in the territory.[2] But he was forced to return to Hyderabad to

safeguard the French interest in the south. In the meantime De Bussy got involved in a quarrel between the Rajahs of Vijayanagram and Bobbilli. The Rajah of Vijayanagaram was killed in the battle and his son Anand Rao conspired with the British East India Company to drive out the French from the Northern Sarkar. Those political developments gave Clive an opportunity to uproot the French Company from this area. Accordingly, Colonel Forde was sent to Vijayanagaram with 500 European soldiers under his command to assist the army of Anand Rao in driving out the French company.

Colonel Forde arrived at Vijayanagaram in 1758 and the combined army of Forde and Anand Rao defeated the French at Paddapore in the Godavari district. In January 1759, he launched a surprise attack on Musalipatnam which was one of the important bases of the French Company. Meanwhile Salabat Jang realized the superior power of the British power and changed his stand and sided with the British and concluded a treaty with them.[3] As a reward to the English, he ceded the whole of Northern Sarkar to the British which included South Orissa. The brother of Salabat Jung, Nizam Ali realizing the importance of the British also ceded the Northern Sarkars to get their friendship after the death of Salbat Jung. The Mughal Emperor on 12 August, 1765 ratified the treaty signed between Forde and Nizam Ali.[4] Northern Sarkar was given to the English as a free gift. Another treaty of 12 November, 1766 between Nizam Ali and the British recognized the soverign rights of the latter over all the zamindars of Northern Sarkar along with the right to collect rents from them. Within the Northern Sarkar, South Orissa being part of the Chicacole sarkar was a part of the Madras Presidency. Thus, South Orissa became a British territory long before other parts of Orissa were annexed. It was transferred to Orissa only when it become a separate province by British Parliament's constitution of Orissa order of 3rd March 1936.[5]

**Ghumsur Zamindary**

Ganjam, which formed the northern most part of the Northern circars was annexed by the British on 12 November, 1766.[6] There were nineteen Zamindaries in Ganjam, out of which Ghumsur Zamindary was one of the oldest hill Zamindary of the district. Ghumsur total area was 1,350 square miles of which 500 square miles were hilly tracts and the rest were plain land. There were dense forests of bamboo trees, particularly along the northern and eastern parts which served as formidable barriers against external attacks. The

climate was hot and in the hill tracts were very unhealthy. The central and southern parts of the zamindary were full of hills and fertile valleys. Ghumsur was bounded in the north by Daspalla, then under the Marathas at Cuttack; towards the east were the estates of Nayagarh, also a tributary of the Marathas and Athagada, in the south lay the Badagada and Dharakote Zamindaries. Surada zamindary was situated on the south-west and the Eastern Ghat mountain ranges with their tribal population and the estates of Karada and Rambha skirted the Ghumsur zamindary on the west; in the north west lay the Boudh zamindary, then subject to the Marathas at Cuttack. Kullada and Durgaprasad and Gallery were strategically important to Ghumsur.

The Ghumsur-Zamindary comprised eighteen muthas or subdivision in the plains and twenty four muthas in the hill tracts. In the plain it had 80 villages, 32,401 houses and a growing population of 1,58,061 in 1871 and 1,81,390 in 1881 with 89,407 males and 91,983 females.[7] The hill tracts of the Zamindari called "the Maliah hill tracts" consisted of 433 villages with a population of 1,12,116 inhabited by the aboriginal tribes principally by khonds.[8] Although the kondhs were subjects of the Bhanja Rajas, they paid no regular tributes to the latter, but they regarded the Rajas as their protectors who used to settle tribal disputes. The kondhs assisted the Rajas in wars and campaigns. The support of the kondhs that made the Bhanja Rajas to feel themselves very powerful. The link between the Raja and his konda subjects was made by an officer with the title Dora Bissoyee. He was appointed by the Raja to act as an agent for the kondh affairs. Next to him in rank were the bissoyes or chiefs of kondh muthas and at the lowest level were the malikas or village chiefs.[9] The Rajas of Bhanja dynasty had maintained good relationship with the kondhs.

The chief of Ghumsur assumed the title of Raja claiming descent from Gajapati Purushottama Deva, the ruler of Orissa from 1479 to 1504. However, the traditional rulers of Ghumsur belonged to the Bhanja dynasty. The state was founded by Banamali Bhanja, younger brother of Raghunath Bhanja, the ruler of Baud in 832 A.D. under the suzerainty of the Bhaumakars of Orissa. The Bhanjas ruled over the territory as the vassals of the Bhaumakaras and then as the vassals of the Somavamsis in the $10^{th}$ A.D. subsequently, Ghumsur came under the Imperial paramountancy of the Eastern Gangas in the early part of $12^{th}$ A.D. After the decline of the imperial power of the Gangas, Ghumsur

passed in to the hands of the Suryavamsi Gajapatis. Ghumsur was also a part of the Bhoi kingdom.[10] Thus the Bhanjas of Gumsur maintained cordial relations with the ruling dynasty of Orissa.

In 1571, Ibrahim Qutub Shahi, the Sultan of Golkonda taking advantage of the political turmoil in Orissa invaded and occupied the coastal tracts as far as Ganjam and Ghumsar.[11] After that Ganjam including Ghumsur formed a part of the Chilkakole Sarkar, in the Northern Sarkars of the Golkunda state. The Sarkar was then called as Ichapur province.[12]

The Mughul Emperor of Delhi, Aurangzeb overthrew the kingdom of Golkunda by defeating and imprisoning its last Qutab Sahi Sultan Abdul Hassan and brought the whole kingdom under the Subadar of the Deccan who afterwards came to be designated as Nizam of Hyderabad. Chikakole Sarkar including Ganjam and Ghumsur was placed under his administration. The emperor paid much attention to 'the Orissa coast and Region' which was no other than 'Ganjam and Ghumsur'.[13]

The Mughal empire began to collapse after the death of Aurangzeb. Taking advantage of the situation, the Nizam of Hyderabad acted like an independent ruler. In the process, Ghumsur came to be administrated by his officials posted in the Chikakole Sarkar. For over two hundred years from 1571 to 1753, Ghumsur remained a tributary state to the Muslim rulers of Hyderabad.

**Resistance against British Authority**

The first resistance movement was led by the Raja Krishna Bhanja against the French authority as represented by General Bussy from 1754 to 1759. General Bussy left Ghumsur after concluding an agreement of peace with Krishna Bhanja in 1759 A.D.[14] The Nizam of Hyderabad withdrew the grant of inam of Northern Sarkars including Ghumsur from the French and subsequently regranted them to the East India company in 1762 A.D. The British accepted the grant of inam of Northern Sarkars including Ganjam and Ghumsur in 1766 A.D. The Madras Government of the East India Company deputed Edward Cotsford as the first Resident to Ganjam.[15] Krishna Bhanja defied all the orders and did not paid tributes to the resident of Ganjam as a result continuous conflict and confrontation ensured between the two from 1766 A.D. to 1773 A.D.[16] It ended with the death of Krishna Bhanja in 1773

A.D. The subsequent Rajas of Ghumsur resisted the British authority. They were Vikrama Bhanja, Lakshna Bhanja, Sreekar Bhanja and Dhanajaya Bhanja.[17]

**Causes of Rebellion**

The British annexation of Ghumsur gave rise to massive unrest and confusion in all rungs of the social hierarchy of the estate. The suppression of the meriah (human sacrifice) and the practice of female infanticide were the other causes for peoples participation against the British. The local feudal aristocracy was deprived of power and position. The native aristocrats felt humiliated and discriminated in all spheres of state services, since under the British administration all high posts were reserved for the Europeans. They thought that the British reduced them to hewers of woods and drawers of water.[18]

Besides, the people of Ghumsur began to fear that the Britisher would convert them to Christianity. The missionary activities of the Christian padres all over the estate alarmed the people about the impending danger to their religion and culture and subsequently they took to arms to defend their faith and culture from being imperiled by the rising tide of Christianity in the region.[19] The bulk of the population, mainly the peasants and labourers, suffered a lot of economic hardship. The introduction of the British Land Revenue Administration, instead of providing any immediate relief to the peasants and labourers, added to their misery and hardship. The peasants and the ryots were required to pay fifty percent of their produce as rent to the British Government. The peasants were required to sell their products at low prices, but they were forced to purchase the non-agricultural goods at the high prices. As a result, the peasants incurred increasing losses and remained in a state of growing destitution. In addition, the natural calamities like drought, famine and epidemies added to the sufferings and distress of the people.

One of the immediate causes for resistance was the peoples dissatisfaction at the arbitrary dissolution of the age-old institution of Rajaship in the estate. They earnestly desired the restoration of the Bhanja family to power. On the other hand, the British officials nominated the persons of their own choice to the management of the Zamindari, at their own whims, against the popular wishes. This, in fact was the crux of all tension in the estate.

The Kondhs demonstrated their strong feudal-political loyalty towards the Bhanja family when in 1835, the Madras Government took over Ghumsur zamindary as a sequel to Raja Dhananjaya Bhanja's non-payment of land revenue. They rose in rebellion against the Government along with the local people, Sirdars, Naiks and Paiks, which led to the tribal uprising in 1836. The king defied the repeated orders of J.A.R Stevenson, the collector of Ganjam to a pay his dues, even after warning that his estate would be taken over by the Government. At last, the Collector decided to take over the zamindary and to effect this, sent a detachment under Lieutenant Colonel S.J. Hodgson in November, 1835.[20] The Government troops occupied Ghumsur and took possession of Kullada, the headquarters of the Bhanja Rajas. Dhananjaya Bhanja, the zamindar fled to the hill tracts of Udayagiri above the Eastern Ghats with his family and with a sum of rupees 70,000, and sought asylum with the local kondhs. The collector took it as an open act of rebellion on the part of Dhananjaya, declared martial law in the estate and confiscated it with immediate effect. A few weeks later, Dhananjaya was reported to have died at Udayagiri on 31st December, 1835 A.D.

Before his death, the kondh chiefs had promised Dhananjaya to save his family and property from the British and to restore the Ghumsur zamindary to his descendents. The leaders were Brundavana Bhanja, step brother of the late Dhananja, Dora Bissoye and Jagannatha Bhanja, a relative of late zamindar. The main aim of the rebels was to setup Varadaraja Bhanja, the thirteen year old son of the late Dhananjaya as the Raja of Ghumsur and to get a general amnesty for all the rebels. But the Government was not ready to accept these demands, they deployed a strong armed force in the zamindary to suppress the rebellion. A contingent under General Taylor was posted at Natanga, about ten miles to the south of Kullada. The Resident of Nagpur, the Commissioner of Cuttack and the Political Agent of Chotanagpur assured their assistance to the Collector of Ganjam. Inspite of all this, the disturbances showed no signs of abatement. At last, the Collector urged the Government to appoint some one with more extensive powers to handle the situation.[21] The Madras Government deputed G.E. Russell as Special Commissioner to deal with the Ghumsur situation.

**Course of Action**

Russell arrived at Ghumsur on 11th January 1836 and joined General Taylors camp at Natanga. He was determined to subdue the rebels by force. The insurgents including Brundavana Bhanja and Dora Bissoye sought refuse in the neighbouring Boudh, Daspalla and Nayagarh estates. The Government declared rewards for capture of Brundavana Bhanja and Dora Bissoye.[22] He sent a military expedition to Udayagiri to capture the family and property of the late Dhananjaya. On 10 February, 1836 troops under the Captains, Butler and Campbell, both of the Madras army, marched into the tribal tracts. The region was hilly, and full of forests and the troops had no knowledge of the tracts of the people and their language which made the movement of troops extremely difficult. On 14 February, a large number of kondhs blocked the movement of the Government troops at the Baibally pass. The kondhs wildly attacked the troops. The Government troops opened fire and dispersed the kondhs on 15 February. When Butler and Campbell arrived at Udayagiri, by that time the family members of the late Dhananjaya escaped. Sam Bissoye and Utansing Dalbehera, the chief of Hajagada and Tentuligada respectively helped Brundavana Bhanja and provided him a secret shelter for which the British troops failed to capture them. Butler and Campbell sent information to Russell, to come to Udayagiri for their help.

On 22 February, Russell arrived at Udayagiri along with Lieutenant Hill, Captain Gray and Assistant Surgeon Cheape. He marched to Hajagada on 25th February but meanwhile, Dhananjayas family had left Hajagada for Pusera in the Chakapad hill tracts. Russell then marched to Pursera and encamped there. A little later, he was joined by Lieutenant Stewart who had succeeded in capturing Utasing of Tentuligada. Russell made good use of the influence of Utasing to win over Sam Bissoye of Hajagada. The kondhs of Chakapad and Pusera finally submitted before the British troops through the two Chiefs. There after, Sam Bissoye assisted Russell both as an informer and guide in all the hill expeditions against the kondhs.[23]

Inspite of their submission, on 5th March, the kondhs again attacked Udayagiri. The kondhs (nearly about 2000) attacked the party of Lieutenant Bromely and Ensign Gibbon at the Kururmingia pass. In the encounter Bromely and Gibbon were killed along with 13 sepoys, 7 women and several servants.[24] The kondhs took away the muskets from the sepoys. As soon as the

report was received, Russell sent Captain Campbell to Udayagiri to relieve the government troops there. Campbell reached Udayagiri on 6th March and dispersed a large body of Kondhs by a bold attack, killing ten. The kondhs kept on setting villages on fire, carrying away grains and killing a small party of guards escorting mails and supplies to the military post at Udayagiri. This prompted Russell to rush to Udayagiri on 11th March. He convened a council of the Kondhs and appealed to the assembled khonds and their Bissoyes through the influential Sam Bissoi, the chief of Hajagada to desist from supporting the insurgents. Resultantly, the assembled tribal chiefs unequivocally resolved to give up their arms in support of their new allegiance to the British Government. and refrain from supporting the rebels. It was a tremendous political victory for Russell in the direction of annexing the khond tracts to the British Empire in India.[25]

The Government maintained a steady policy of conciliation and good will to the local milita consisting of the Sardars, Nayak and Paiks. As a result, the latter, enlisted themselves as servants of the Government in between March and April, 1836 and their land holdings were confirmed by the collector, Ganjam, in lieu of their service to the British Government. The aim of this policy was to enlist the support of these militia classes and take advantage of their local knowledge, experience and military skill for suppression of rebellions and annexation of the Ghumsur territories.

Early in May, Russel arrived at the base camp at Nuagam, determined to capture Dora Bissoye, the brain behind the kondh uprising, who was reportedly hiding in the hill tracts between Surada and Sanakhemundi. The month long military operation against Dora Bissoye failed to result in his capture. Between June and October military operation was suspended due to rainy season. This suspension of military operations was made use of by Dora Bissoye to fan the flame of revolt in kondh tracts. He was successful in creating an impression among the kondhs that the British. intended to occupy the tribal territory and impose taxes on its inhabitants. This led the kondhs to call their depredations to the plains of Ghumsur as a challenge to the British. authority. Russell then issued proclamations with a view to convincing the kondhs the real objects of the Government, in the khond language to inspire confidence and trust among the khonds by doing away with their fear about the British administration. The khonds were appealed to behave themselves as the

dutiful subjects of the paramount Government. But the proclamation failed to make any impact on the khonds, the latter did not give up arms. As a result, the Government was compelled to resume military operation in November, 1836 for the second time. Troops under General Taylor took possession of the kondh strongholds of Patlingia, Gunjabad, Mukalingia, Sikiri, Kumbharakumpa, Kurmingia and Kalinga.[26] This action intensified the hostility of the kondhs who attacked Taylor's detachment at Kurmingia and wounded some sepoys. Simultaneously, they attacked troops under Colonel Alves and Russell at Kalinga, injuring some troops. A full scale of war was .followed and Russell under took a thorough combing operation in the tribal tracts of Ghumsur. Meanwhile, Dora Bissoye and his followers fled to the Jungless of Korada and Ranabha, two petty estates on the west of Ghumsur. He then escaped to Sanakhemundi hills and thence to Balangiri-Patna Zamindary. Later on, he was reported to have taken shelter in the Angul Zamindary, where the zamindar, Somnath Singh handed over to the Government in December, 1837. The Government then sent him away to Gooty[27] as a state prisoner.[28]

**Final Suppression of the Rebellion and Annexation of Ghumsur Zamindary**

The vigorous campaigns of the British troops struck terror in the minds of the kondhs. When they were left without a leader, they were demoralized and the unity of the rebels was broken and most of the insurgents fell into the hands of the Government troops. In panic, same rebels fled to the Boudh zamindary under the protection of Nabaghana Kanhara, the local kondh chief. But the Raja of the Boudh estate informed the Government about the presence of Ghumsur rebels in his territory. On the receipt of this information, troops from both Madras and Bengal moved on simultaneously into the Baud estate and captured the rebels in a large numbers from the jungles. With the capture of 164 insurgents, the kondh insurrection was totally suppressed and the campaign against the kondhs of Ghumsur came to an end in December, 1836. The Government dealt with them very severely, sixty three of the rebels including Brundavan Bhanja were executed in public, forty five were imprisoned, thirty six transported for life beyond the seas and only twenty were acquitted. This drastic measure at last brought back peace and tranquility to Ghumsur.[29]

After the dusts of rebellion and insurgence were settled down, the Special Commissioner, Russell took all possible measures to consolidate the British possessions in Ghumsur. The removal of the Bhanja family was thought to be a necessary measure for preservation of a peace in Ghumsur. Consequently, the surviving members of the Bhanja family were removed to the distant Vellore in the South near Madras as state prisoners. Two of the principal officers of the late Raja, who were real brains behind the resistance movement, Chyau Patnaik and Ratan Patnaik were expelled from the estate with grants of lands as means of their subsistence.

The whole of the Ghumsur zamindari along with eighteen muthas in the plains and twenty four muthas in the hill tracts and amalgamated Surada zamindari was physically occupied and annexed and was brought under the direct authority of the British Government. due to the fruitful initiatives of the Special Commissioner G.E. Russel. Therefore in 1837, the Government established a Regiment in Ghumsur at the foot of a hill land and named it "Russell konda" in commemoration of the great services rendered by Russell towards the establishment of the British empire in India.

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# Freedom Movement in Koraput District

*Nihar Ranjan Patnaik*

In the National Movement of India, Koraput district (undivided) of Orissa played a major role. In the beginning, of course, the people were not very much aware of the objectives of the movement. A drive to enroll primary members to the National Congress was undertaken in 1929 as the first step to popularise the Congress movement.[1] The Congress workers toured Koraput to spread the message of khadi and to influence the people to take part in the programmes of the Congress. One Radhakrushna Biswasroy of Koraput on the advice of Gopabandhu Choudhury, a prominent Congress leader, resigned from government service in 1929 and joined the Congress.[2] During the Salt Movement in 1930, many volunteers joined the strike and courted arrest under his leadership. They were later released following the Gandhi-Irwin Pact.[3]

Orissa became a separate province in 1936 and Koraput was made a district thereof. Since that time, the Congress programmes were followed and implemented on an extensive scale because of the strong organisational leadership of Radhakrushna Biswasroy. The people of Koraput realised that the Congress was the only organisation that could put an end to their suffering. Consequently, the tribals, the poor and the downtrodden joined the Congress and started spreading its message, plans and programmes.[4] Three persons, Radhakrushna Biswasroy, Radhamohan Sahu and Sadashib Tripathy, greatly contributed to the popularity of the Congress. Lakshman Naik, a celebrated freedom fighter and tribal leader played a significant role to popularise the Congress. The fact that he could drive home the principles and policies of the Congress and drew the hill-men towards it, bore irrefutable proof of his able leadership. Because of this he rose to become the President of the Primary Congress Committee of his native place Tentuligumma and also an influential member of the Koraput District Committee.[5] He courted arrest for the first time in 1936, while motivating the people at the Matili market of Malkangiri Tahsil against paying any illegal tax.[6]

People gradually came to appreciate more and more the plans and programmes of the Congress. The public support which the Congress enjoyed

in Koraput was reflected in the elections held in 1937. All the three Congress candidates, Radhakrushna Biswasroy, Radhamohan Sahu and Sadashib Tripathy were elected to the Orissa Legislative Assembly. The event of these three candidates sweeping the elections, accelerated the Congress movement in Koraput.[7] Moreover, the campaign for the elections also made the people politically more conscious.[8]

Constructive work played an important role in the Gandhian strategy of the Indian National Movement. It was primarily organised around for the promotion of Khadi, Charkha spinning and village industries, national education, struggle against untouchability and social upliftment of the Harijans and the tribals, and boycott of foreign cloth and liquor. Constructive work was symbolised by hundreds of Ashrams and training centres which came up all over the country, almost entirely in the villages.[9] Radhakrushna Biswasroy, the then District Congress President of Koraput and member of the Orissa Legislative Assembly, came forward to set up such a training camp in his district. In December 1937, a training camp was inaugurated at Nuaput near Jeypore by a senior Congress leader Gopabandhu Choudhury. Arrangements were made to impart training to 350 Congress workers belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes in Khadi and in other fields.[10] Acharya Harihar Das, Godabarish Mishra and Gokulananda Mohanty visited Nuaput, stayed there for some days and also supervised the training programmes on the request of Gopabandhu Choudhury.[11] It was remarkable that Lakshman Naik attended the training camp.[12] After undergoing training, the Congress workers returned to their respective villages and spread the message of freedom. These trained workers became the Chief Coordinators between the Orissa Congress and the residents of Koraput.

Ever since the Congress candidates were elected from Koraput in the elections held in 1937 and with the Congress forming the Government in Orissa it was as if the people had a fresh lease of life, and a sense of renewed courage. People in large numbers joined the Congress. By October 1938, the Congress had as many as 50,048 persons enrolled as primary members. In entire Orissa, the Koraput District occupied the second position in this matter. The first position was secured by the Cuttack District where 58,878 persons were enrolled as primary members of the Congress.[13]

A novel form of revolution against the British rule known as Individual Civil Disobedience Movement was launched by Mahatma Gandhi in November 1940. A list of persons from Koraput willing to join the movement was prepared and the chief among them were Radhakrushna Biswasroy, Radhamohan Sahu and Nilakantha Patra of Jeypore; Sadashib Tripathy, Sadananda Mohanty and Lakshmi Chandra Das of Nowrangpur; Kapil Patra and Satyanarayan Majhi of Kotpad; and Lakshman Naik from Matili.[14] In the movement, from Orissa about five hundred people, the majority of whom belonged to Koraput, courted arrest.[15] However all the Congress workers were released after undergoing imprisonment for four to five months.

A breath-taking scene of the great Indian Freedom Struggle was enacted in the year 1942 and that was the Quit India Movement. In Orissa, which was staunchly a Gandhite Province, the people did not remain inactive when the whole of India was seized by the storm of the movement. Before the Quit India Movement was launched, an urgent meeting of the Congress workers of Koraput was convened at Jeypore on July 31, 1942. The proposals of the Quit India Movement was discussed.[16] It was decided that Radhakrushna Biswasroy would represent Koraput in the Bombay Session of the Indian National Congress and he also accordingly attended the Bombay Session. He went into hiding following the mass arrest of Congress leaders on the 9th August. He despatched some secret codes, alongwith other notes for the Congress workers of Koraput.[17] He was arrested on his way back and was put in Koraput Jail. Koraput District Congress Committee was declared unlawful and the office of the Koraput Congress Committee was seized by the police. Two other Congress leaders, Radhamohan Sahu and Sadashib Tripathy were also arrested.[18] The Government could not cut off Koraput from the main stream of the August Revolt, even after putting into Jail three most prominent leaders of Koraput. The movement created an unprecedented public awakening in Koraput.[19]

The message of the August Revolt was circulated in the whole of Koraput through secret bulletins which deeply enthused the freedom fighters of Koraput. On the strength of it they declared Koraput independent and went on rampaging in groups. The revolt spread through the tribal tracts like a wild fire.[20] Hartals were observed at many places and shops and markets were

closed down. Burning down of the government buildings and post offices, incidents of arson, loot and riot and other acts of violence rocked the whole of Koraput, making it appear as though a skilled local leader was organising the movement there.[21] But the truth is that there was an element of spontaneity about everything that took place. A revolutionary zeal and excitement lay at the root of this spontaneity.

On August 13, 1942, two young men from Jeypore, holding Congress flags, read out a message of Gandhi at a public meeting. The message was believed to have been sent from Bombay by post.[22] This message aroused the local people to such frenzied heights that the sparks of the movement were seen spreading far and wide in Koraput.[23]

By the 14th August 1942, most of the Congress leaders of Koraput had been taken into custody except Lakshman Naik. He prepared to continue the struggle with the help of Balaram Pujari and two hundred other followers. Each holding a Congress flag and a lathi with a sling-bag containing a picture of Gandhi slung over the shoulder, these workers moved in the dense forests from one end of the district to another, calling upon the people to join the movement in large number.[24] The people swore on oath that they would continue untiringly the direct struggle against the British Government until Gandhi, the Great, was released from jail.[25]

On 14th August, not only did the strikers raided the shops at Nandpur in Koraput, they also looted a wholesale depot. One hundred nineteen persons courted arrest.[26] Twenty five of them were detained for prosecution and the rest were dispersed.[27] The very next day, a crowd of about one thousand people gheraoed the Jeypore Taluk Office. Some of their leaders were arrested.[28] This enraged the people and they blocked the entrance to the police station. Though the police managed to disperse the crowd by resorting to lathi charge, the daringness of the freedom fighters amidst police repression became a subject of discussion in and around Koraput. On the other hand, it became a matter of concern for the police. After this incident the police swung into action to arrest Lakshman Naik. In order to avoid his arrest, Lakshman Naik went to Ghumar, the native village of his faithful friend, Nilakantha Patra.[29]

Another incident took place that day. The Congress workers gathered in front of an opium kiosk at Badhighar and urged the vendor, Sadashiba Choudhury, to surrender all opium in stock. These Satyagrahis were mainly tribals and farmers living under Matili-Podua police stations. They entered the premises of the shop, each holding a lathi and a Congress flag. Frightened Sadashiba Choudhury surrendered his opium stock weighing ten tolas (about one hundred grams), the balance and the weights to the Satyagrahis. Through this act of theirs the Satyagrahis wanted to prove that the Government had no authority to collect excise duty on opium. Inspired by the success of this operation, the crowd marched towards the residence of Keshab Patra, the Mustadar of Badhighar. Patra was extremely unpopular with the local farmers, for he employed very stern measures to collect land revenue from them. Most of the peasants who gheraoed the opium stall were the ryots of Keshab Patra. They seized this opportunity to give vent to their setting discontent. But Keshab Patra was away at a nearby village, Gobindpalli, and his absence disappointed the Satyagrahis. Then they moved towards Khogan, a place some three miles away from Badhighar. The Satyagrahis forced Padma Bissi, a liquor vendor, to close down his liquor shop. They also removed the sign-board. Returning to Badhighar market they trampled on the wares displayed. These acts of violence might be described as the outbrust of public anger against the British Government.[30]

On 17th August, the Congress workers, armed with lathis, assembled at the Revenue Rest House of Jeypore located at Semiliguda. The police, on reaching the spot, dispersed the crowd of Satyagrahis.[31] In Gunpur events took a different turn. The Congress workers picketed the liquor shops, the court and other business establishments and courted arrest. In another incident hundreds of people thronged the Dasmantpur Police Station and told the Police, "Now the British are gone. This country is ours, you better join us and proclaim our independence".[32] The police selectively picked up eight rebel leaders and dispersed the rest. A similar incident took place at Lakshmipur. An angry mob surrounded the police station and set fire to the records.[33] Another outburst of public anger was seen at Guneipada Shandy, situated thirty miles west of Padwa Police Station. On 18th August 1942, about 400 Congressmen armed with Congress flag and sticks visited the Shandy at about noon, shouting 'Gandhiji Ki Jay'. They incited the people not to pay Shandy Tax. Just then Shandy contractor, Mangala Ratan, came on his round and issued a stamped receipt to one Sonu Ratan's son. The Congressmen immediately snatched away the receipt, tore it and demanded from the Shandy Contractor, why he had disobeyed the mandate of the Congress. The

Congressmen now went on destroying the shandy huts of the shopkeepers, spilt kerosene out of the oil tins, tore the mill thread and destroyed the mill cloths of many stall keepers. They also looted the shops of the confectioners and ate their sweet-meats. They chased the Shandy Contractors and heat the Constable out of the Shandy.[34] Such incidents repeated themselves at many places in Koraput. At some places people caused extensive damage to the Reserve Forests by felling trees. They even blew up a bridge at Amapanighat situated on the borders of Koraput and Kalahandi.[35] The situation assumed such alarming proportions that the British Government apprehended that these incidents would soon turn into a Fituri (uprising).[36]

On the 17th August, supported by the Congress workers, Lakshman Naik raided the liquor shops at Kongrabeda and smashed the wire vessels and containers. He then proceeded to Kuntipalli with his followers at noon. They were accompanied by people belonging to tribal and milkmen communities. Weilding lathis and flaunting Congress flags they raided the liquor shops at Kuntipalli and smashed the barrels and other instruments used for brewing. The next day, on 18th August, Lakshman Naik led another raid. He and his followers smashed another wine shop at Sindhabeda. Besides, Lakshman Naik, other leaders with great fame were Balaram Pujari, Padlam Naik and Moti Singh. The charge of raiding an opium stall at Salimi, lying some eight miles to the west of Sindhabeda, was given to Padlam Naik of Kaliaguda. Padlam, leading a brigade of Congress workers reached Salimi at about 3 P.M. One S. Chandrasekhar Patnaik was selling opium on his verandah. Padlam and his party on reaching the place destroyed opium weighing about thirty-eight tolas. Bhima Naik, a close associate of Padlam, tore up the accounts book into pieces. There followed a brief tussle between Chandrasekhar and Bhima Naik. This incident however, just stopped short of turning more violent. Like Lakshman Naik, Moti Singh, the Nayak of Tanguda was famous for implementing Congress programmes in Malkanagiri. Both Lakshman Naik and Balararn Pujari called on Moti singh at Dompalli Market on 19th August. It was decided that the liquor shop at Pushpalli would be attacked under the leadership of Moti Singh. Accordingly he and his party reached Pushpalli at 4 P.M. They told the vendor, Dayanidhi by name, that the 'British Raj' had ended, that 'Swaraj' would be established, and that no tax or otherwise would be paid. Then he forced the vendor to close down his shop. This apart, they also smashed the equipments used for brewing liquor. Dayanidhi was physically removed from the scene by Moti Singh when he tried to resist. The amount of damage was nearly sixty rupees.

In the meantime, Radhakrushna Biswasroy had sent from Bombay the plan and programmes of the Quit India Movement to be undertaken in Koraput. Nilakantha Patra of Ghumar received a copy of the message, Lakshman Naik learnt every thing from it. He decided in consultation with Nilakantha Patra that the people from neighbouring villages would be mobilised and a huge procession taken to Matili.[37] They decided to stage a demonstration in front of the Police Station there. They would only squat peacefully without resorting to violence and shout slogans against the British Government. Lakshman naik promptly despatched written copies of the programmes fixed for the 21st August to all villages coming under Matili Police Station of Malakangiri Tahsil. Lakshman Naik was so popular that people took his words as divine message. He was rightly called by the people 'the Gandhi of Malkanagiri'. However the local police apprehended that the proposed demonstration to be led by Lakshman Naik might turn into an attack.[38] The Congress workers and their supporters might suddenly abandon peaceful means and take recourse to violence. Given the chance, the demonstrators would not only beat up the police personnel, they might also kill some of them. It was a challenge for the District Police authorities. They did not spare any efforts to foil the demonstration and the siege.

The appointed day came. It was the 21st day of August, 1942, a lunar Friday in the month of Sravan. Unending streams of humanity were seen moving towards Matili. The call of Lakshman Naik mesmerized them. Drawn by his magic, people unquestionably followed their respective leaders. Each group, flaunting a Congress flag and chanting Ramdhun, marched ahead. Occasionally they would burst out into the slogan 'Victory to Mahatma Gandhi' (Mahatma Gandhi ki Jay). It had been previously decided that all should gather at Matili market place. The market site was an open place and big enough to accommodate such a large crowd. Being a Friday, it was a market day. The place teemed with Congress activities and their sympathisers in addition to the usual market crowd. There was hardly any empty space in the market. Innumerable Congress flags fluttered in the sky. It appeared as if a second Jallianwalabagh meeting was going to be held.[39] Lakshman Naik addressed the people and briefed the people about Ute agenda of the day. From there they would proceed to Matili Police Station. The Congress flag would be hoisted atop the police station. They would squat until they were arrested. Everything must be done in a non-violent manner. Thereafter the people marched in files towards Matili Police Station.

Sub-Inspector Jagannaikulu Dora was then the Officer-in-Charge of Matili Police Station. The clever Police Officer had prior information of such an agitation. Therefore counter measures had already been taken to tackle the situation. The police personnel of other police stations and other local government staff were called to tackle the situation. The Matili police station was half mile away from the market place. Lakshman Naik and others reached there in half-an-hour's time. On seeing them approaching, the Divisional Inspector of Police, B.S. Nanda with his party intercepted them on the road lying about two hundred yards to the east of the police station. There followed an exchange of hot words between the two sides for a long time. Lakshman Naik and his followers were unable to decide their next course of action and returned to the market.[40] A meeting was again held presided over by Lakshman Naik.[41]

It was noon by then; Lakshman Naik and his followers once again were on their way to blockade the police station. They all advanced to enter the compound. The police resorted to lathi charge without prior warning.[42]

Even though mercilessly beaten by the police, the Satyagrahis did not hit back. Lakshman Naik was brutally beaten. So he lay unconscious. The angry mob tried to force their way into the police station by breaking the bamboo fence running around it. The policemen and peons who tried to obstruct them were pushed down in the scuffle that ensued. This incident probably injured the pride of the self-conceited policemen. Enraged, they suddenly opened fire upon the unarmed people. According to Government Report, five persons were killed and seventeen injured in the police firing.[43] But undoubtedly the death toll was much higher than is admitted in the Government Report. All the demonstrators were more or less injured. A sense of terror gripped Matili in the wake of the police firing. The panic-stricken people closed the market and fled. The people did not even light their hearths, let alone stir out. There prey ailed a tense situation all round.

In this incident the Forest Guard G. Ramayya was found dead. Ramayya's death was blessing in disguise for the policemen. They wanted Lakshman Naik, the kingpin, sentenced to death under the provision of law. Lakshman Naik was falsely accused for beating the Forest Guard to death. The police arrested him from his village on 2nd September 1942 and sent him to Berhampur Jail. The police charged Lakshman and fifty-three others with murder, looting, arson and other acts of violence.[44] The trial of Lakshman Naik and his fellow activists was nothing more than a shame.[45] The court of Additional Sessions Judge, Koraput sentenced Lakshman Naik to death. The other forty-nine persons including Balaram Pujari were sentenced to life

imprisonment, the first nine years being rigorous. Only from among the fifty-four accused persons four were acquitted as charges against them could not be proved. After the judgement had been pronounced Lakshman Naik was sent to Berhampur Jail for execution. The remaining forty-nine convicted persons remained in the Koraput Jail to undergo their term of rigorous imprisonment. An appeal was filed in the Patna High Court against the conviction of Lakshman Naik. But it upheld and confirmed the death sentence passed on Lakshman Naik.[46] On 29th March, 1943, Lakshman Naik was hanged to death in Berhampur Jail. He died a Marty's death at the hands of the colonial administration and passed into a legend.[47]

After the Matili massacre, another dreadful rising occured in Nabarangpur sub-division. It was on 24th August, 1942 that about five thousand people assembled at Papadahandi located six miles away from Nabarangpur town to decide the course of action of the National Movement. They decided to destroy on that day a police station in Nabarangpur. A large procession was started towards Nabarangpur under, the leadership of Jagannath Tripathy, Simhachala Behera, S.P. Sharaff and Laxman Chandra Das.[48] On the way the people were to cross the river Turi on which there was a wooden bridge. The river was then in high flood. As soon, as the procession reached the bridge, a police party stopped it.[49] The people dismantled the wooden bridge.[50] There was an encounter, the ear of one sepoy being hurt by the stick of a flag was injured and blood oozed Out.[51] The police then resorted to lathi charge and firing. The road was narrow on the either side and nearby fields were inundated by flood water. A large number of people jumped into the rivet to swim across for safety. In this skirmish nineteen persons were killed and about one hundred were injured.[52] One hundred and forty persons were arrested[53] and tortured inside a school building.[54]

During this Quit India Movement a large number of Satyagrahis were arrested. Koraput Jail which was to accommodate 250 persons at the most was huddled with about 700 to 800 persons.[55] The number of casualties during the Quit India Movement in Koraput District were as follows. 25 persons died in firing, 2 persons including a boy of 4 years died in lathi-charge, 50 died inside the Jail and 32 persons were to undergo transportation of life.[56] The persons sent to jail were released on 23rd April 1946, when the Congress Ministry assumed the Office. Besides, the Courts imposed fines amounting to Rs.11200/- out of which Rs.9371/- was realised.[57] The Government also adopted certain repressive measures to quell the movement in the Koraput District.[58] All these eloquently speak the magnitude of the National Movement in Koraput District.

After much sorrow and suffering, ups and downs, oppression and persecution, India achieved Independence on 15th August 1947. Of course, many did not live to see India win freedom. But the people of Independent India can not forget the glorious role of the people of Koraput District in the historic, National Movement of their motherland.

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# Performing Art of South Orissa: A Study on Folk Dance

***Manmath Padhy***

Any form of art whether it is painting or performing, takes shape in the form and character in a continued tradition over years of sincere pursuit. Over centuries they drew inspiration from the prevailing religion, art and culture. Thus, the performing arts of any country or region can be regarded as unassuming creative expression of the people. They form an integral part of their lives. From ancient period, dance, music and festivals constitute the common feature of the socio-cultural life of the people of Orissa. The Oriyas have ornamented the whole land with innumerable temples. Orissa's dance, music, festivals and *yatras* have originated from these temples. They practically epitomise the social and cultural life of the Oriyas[1].

In South Orissa, be it dance or music, it is a soul-filling means of religious participation, a way of reaching the God. Therefore, most of them are associated with religious worship, fairs, festivals and as well as they serve as means of social and cultural recreations. Dance is the most popular form of south Orissan performing art. The people of south Orissa evolved their unique native styles which are distinctly different from other regions. Different dances are performed according to the religious rituals, and they are celebrated, associated with the arrangement of fairs, festivals and gatherings of friends and relatives of the rural folk. On festive occasions, folk dances like *Danda Nacha, Bharata Leela, Krushna Leela, Rama Leela, Prahalada Nataka, Chadeiya Nacha, Das Kathia, Paik Nacha, Sakhi Nacha* or *Radha Prema Leela, Kandhei Nacha* etc. are performed. The cultural activities of the region are mainly based on mythological legends. They have been influencing the society to a large by creating a sense of 'fellow-feeling' among the people in different ways, such as patriotic spirit, love for literature, belief in God, taste for music, theatre and dance.

*Danda Nata*

*Danda Nata* is the earliest form of folk dance of South Orissa that is based on religious traditions of the worship of Lord Shiva and Goddess Kali[2]. *Danda* means a pole, *Nata* means dance. They totally mean a festival celebrated for the worship of Shiva in which a pole represents the God[3]. It is a very popular theatrical forms of folk dance of south Orissa. *Danda Nata* is a mixture of both religious and secular values and substances. It has its root in the socio-religious and cultural history of Orissa with special reference to the Siva Kali legend.[4] It aims at arousing religious fervor as well as entertaining aesthetic pleasure among the spectators especially to promote spiritual upliftment through rigorous self discipline.

The origin of *Danda Nata* has been traced to the 8th century A.D. especially during the period of the inception of Tantricism after decadence of Buddhism in Orissa. It is evident that after the degradation of Buddhism in Orissa Saivism became a popular religion most particularly for the untouchables and low caste people into which the status of most of the Buddhists were relegated. Since the upper class Hindus monopolized the privilege of entry to the temples and debarred the untouchables and low castes from entering the Hindu temples, they began to worship Siva outside the Hindu temples[5]. In due course of time they observed certain rites in connection with the worship of Siva and started a festival once a year called *Danda Nata*[6]. Gradually these practices of the rituals and festival became the integral part of the *Danda Nata* and the practice turning to a tradition.

*Danda Nata* is celebrated in the month of Baisakha (April-May) for 13 or 21 days. Usually, the *Danda Nata* commences from the Mina Trayodasi (thirteenth day of the second of the month of Chaitra (last part of March) and closes on the Mahavisuba Samkranti (first day of Mesha (mid April). The dance too has a tribal origin. The very conception of this dance or *Nata* rallies round a tribal story about a *sabara*. However, the story gives emphasis on the external truth of the ultimate victory of the good over the evil and of the truth over the untruth[7].

*Danda* also means penance and *Nata* means dance. Together they mean a festival celebrated for the worship of Siva in which penance, dance, songs and physical feats are all meant to please the God and invoke His

blessings. During *Danda Nata* a huge wooden pole or a long bamboo stick having thirteen knots[8] is worshipped by thirteen or more devotees for thirteen or twenty-one days terminating with *Visuba Samkranti* or *Meru Samkranti*.

The persons who participate in this *Nata* are called *Danduas* or *Bhaktas*. Any male person, irrespective of his caste, creed, colour and economic status can participate in this dance[9]. The *danduas* voluntarily undergo all the ordeals of this dance in their respective *manasikas* or holy commitments with the avowed intentions of accomplishing their much cherished ambitions and desires. The participating *bhaktas* offer their reverence and devotion to both lord Siva and Goddess Kali by way of their participation in *Danda Nata* which means a dance of inflicting to the sins which they think that they have committed in their lives. *Danda* involves very rigorous self discipline such as taking simple food once a day, observing vigil and not to sleep in the houses of others. A *dandua* undergoes several courses of ordeals while doing *Danda*, inflicting injury and torture on himself, so that he would be able to liberate himself form the cycle of *karma* or *pratikarma* or free himself from the results of the sins if he had committed inadvertently or otherwise[10]. A *dandua* remains practically on fast with all sanctity in all these days except taking simple food in the night hours along with his co-participants, in total silence in a remote place quite away from the crowds of human settlements. The *bhaktas* or *danduas* move from village to village and perform the dance at a house when invited[11].

There is no caste distinction in *Danda Nata*, whoever desires, irrespective of their caste, creeds, social and economic status may join it as *Danduas*. However, participation in *Danda Nata* as a *Dandua* or *Bhakta* is allowed to males only. During the period of the *Danda* the *bhaktas* stay in the group avoiding all contact with women or anything worldy in nature. The leader of *Danda Nata* group is called *Pata-Dandua* or *Pata-Bhakta* (the chief devotee).

*Danda Nata* is performed in four phases. In the first phase or in the morning, *Bandana* or prayer is conducted by the *danduas* in front of the house of the sponsoring devotee. In this phase, a contract or promise is also concluded between the sponsor and the *Danda* party about holding of a *Nata* in the night of that day in front of the former's residence.

The second phase starts at the midday, in front of the sponsoring *bhakta* with the performance of "*Dhuli Danda*' (Punishing his own body by sleeping on and playing with hot sands on the surface of earth), where the *danduas* do all kinds of torturous physical exercises on the heated ground with bare bodies under the scorching heat of the sun. By doing such painful physical exercises the *Danduas* believes that they are doing a penance for their sins. This dance is mainly associated with the agricultural activities such as ploughing, sowing, reaping and harvesting of paddy. It reflects the joy and sorrow of the common people during the course of its enactment. These functions represent the occupation and life-style of the aborigines of the olden days. The rural folk of entire Ganjam in general and the Kandhs of Ghumsur area in particular adopted this system of worship in their social life[12]. However, in this phase, the *danduas* do their physically torturous dance with the beatings of the *dhola* (big drum) at the instructions of the conductor *dandua*[13].

The next phase begins with the drowning of the *danduas* deep in water of an specified tank or river, of and on for about an hour called *Jala Danda* or *Pani Danda* (means receiving punishment or physical torture in water). After *Jala Danda* is over, the *danduas* get themselves ready for taking the day's only meal which is simplest in its kind[14]. The meal is being taken late evening amidst the continuous sound of the drum beating, played by the drummers. As soon as the drum beatings stops, the *danduas* stop taking their meal. The beating of drum is necessary because the *danduas* would not be able to hear any sound except the beating of drums while eating their meals. If a *dandua* happens to hear any external sound while taking food then he abandons his meal and remains on fasting till the next meal on the next day[15]. After eating is over, they proceed to a temple preferably that of lord Siva and stay there till the fourth phase starts in the night.

'*Agni Danda*' or playing or dancing with fire is the last phase of this dance. This phase starts in the night around 12 o'clock. The *Danda* performers go to the village in procession during mid-night holding the lighted *danda-ghadis*. Many in the procession perform acrobatics and are displayed with torches which is called *danda-khela*. During *angi-danda*, the *prabha-nata* (dance with a painted Kali banner) or *Kala-nata* is also performed. The *danduas* offer puja and propitiate lord Siva and Goddess Kali in front of the house of the sponsoring *bhakta* through '*Agni Danda*' or dancing with the fire.

When this is over, different performing folk arts including dance and drama are performed there to entertain the general audience. After the end of the dance and theatre, the *danduas* disperse from there in the morning in a procession with the beating of drums. They repeat this routine *Nata* performance in different places for 13 or 21 days. They conclude the *Danda Nata* on the Visuva Samkranti day with all serenity and sanctity in the observation of rites and rituals in the valedictory celebrations[16]. *Danda Nata* is a popular theatrical performance in south Orissa. It creates an atmosphere of joy with its charming songs, exhilarating dance and dramatic action.

***Sakhi Nacha***

*Sakhi Nacha* is another very popular dance drama of South Orissa. *Sakhi* means female companion. The concept of *Sakhi Nacha* has been developed on the eternal love story of Radha and Krishna. It is believed that Krishna used to meet Radha disguised as different personalities in different times and the *Sakhis* of Radha played a greater role in helping Krishna for the same. They also sue to dance on other similar developed songs. Numerous troops of *Sakhi Nacha* are found in Ganjam particularly, each of which consists of a vocal instructor-cum-string player, two or three rhythm players and about half a dozen dancing boys some of them appear on the stage dressed as girls. It is said that Kabisamrat Upendra Bhanja, used to organise such dancing teams under his supervision[17]. The *Sakhi Nacha* groups mostly perform the Odissi songs composed by the classical medieval poets like Upendra Bhanja, Kabisurya Baladev Rath and Gopalkrushna Pattnaik, on the theme of divine love and romance between Krishna and Radha in the company of their *Sakhis* or female companions. The participants dance while singing *Champus*, *Bhajans* and *Choutishas* in chorus. The audience of *Sakhi Nacha* is quite selective and includes mostly the younger sections of people who show great interest in romantic songs and dances. Most of the *Sakhi Nacha* teams include boys for the purpose of singing and dancing in the guise of girls. But the zamindars of Mohuri and Khallikote patronage lady dancers, who perform *Sakhi Nacha* in their palace.[18] In past, the *Sakhi Nacha* groups received the financial support from the rulers and zamindars and used to visit distant places like Athagarh, Tekkali, Badagada, Manjusa and also Puri. In Puri district this dance is known as the 'Gotipua *Nacha*', where a boy only takes part[19]. But, the number of *Sakhi Nacha* parties at present is fast dwindling due to lack of patronage.

## Chadheiya *Nacha*

This dance is peculiar to the Ganjam district only. *Chadheiya* means bird-catcher who makes a living by catching birds and selling them. An improvised pattern of the Chadheiya dance is now added in '*Danda Nacha*'. But the difference is that in the '*Danda Nacha*', the *chadheiya* and *chadheiyani* (wife of Chadheiya) appear on the scene and the couple sing ballad in praise of Lord Siva and Goddess Parvati while in the Chadeiya dance feminine character is absent. Moreover, it is a group dance comprising six or more *chadheiyas* on the theme of a hunting expedition of the *chadheiyas*. The colourful dress pattern and the unique body movement of the dancers synchronising with the music emanating from the *Dholki* keeps one spell bound. The dance which starts slowly gains momentum and the dancer's stepping and body movement grow quicker and quicker till the audiences are thrilled with excitement[20].

## *Changunata*

*Changu* is a musical instrument of rural variety of tambourine. It is played by the male members of the Saora, Kandha communities of Koraput and Phulbani districts. The dance in accompaniment to the *Changu* is performed by women alone. The men only sing songs, play on the *Changu* and move with the female dancers with simple steps. In the dance, the women advance one step and back forming half round movement. In between, the male-dancers perform vigorous stunts in which they leap into the air and make wide circling movements.

In a peculiar way the women cover up their bodies with long local made *saris*. Only their bangled hands and feet remain visible. In a group, the female dancers dance in a half-sitting position with swaying and sometimes jerky movements. During festivals and on any moon-lit night, the young boys and girls assemble and dance to express their joy in living[21].

## Ghuduki *Nacha*

This dance is performed with a music instrument called Ghuduki. This instrument is prepared out of the gourd or hollowed wood into which a string is tied. Two or three dancers dance to the rhythm of this musical instrument[22]. The youths of south Orissa like this dance very much for its pleasant music and song.

### *Oshakothi/Kothisala* or *Ghatakalasi* Dance

*Oshakothi* or *Kothisala* dance is performed for seven days proceeding the full-moon day of Ashwina (Kumar Purnima) by certain low caste people of south Orissa. The origin of this tradition may be traced back to the early medieval period of caste rigidity where the low caste people were not allowed to enter in to the temples. Probably the deprival of these low caste people to the temples might have prompted them to look for an alternative and obvisouly they might have selected '*Kothisala*' or the common house of their habitation center. Since this dance form originated from the '*Kothisala*' it is named as *Kothisala* dance. The walls of *Kothasala* (the common house of congregation) are painted with the frescoes of different Goddesses which constitute a rich heritage of fine art of the region. The dance is performed by a male dancer in female costume. The dancer with flowers, gorgeous dress and affixing a small pot (*dhala* or *kalasa*) on his head, moved from village to village to conduct the dances. The dancer dances in different poses with the tuning of drums and *Mohuri* throughout the day in different villages and returns to the *Kothasala* in the evening. In Kothisala dance, both men and women devotees invoke the blessings of Goddesses for their peace and happiness[23]. It is also known as *Ghata Kalasi* as the dancer uses to keep a *Kalasa* over his head while performing the dance.

### Ghoomra Dance

Ghoomra dance is named after a typical earthen drum called *Ghumra.* It is just like a big pitcher, the mouth of which stems out like a cylinder and is covered with the skin of a snake or of a *godhi* (monitor lizard). When played with both hands, it produces a peculiar sound quite different from other varieties of drums. The dance is performed by a group of male members who dressed themselves in coloured clothes and jackets. They use turbans on which peacock feathers are attached. They also fastened *ghagudi* (a chain of brass bells) on their waists and *ghoonguras* (a chain of small brass bells) on their feet which produces musical sound while dancing. The performance begins with slow circular movements and after a brief dance sequence in different rhythmic patterns, all the dancers move in a concrete circle and then stand erect in a line. Then the singer sings in praise of different Gods and Goddesses. During the song the drums remain silent. After the prayer song, songs relating to the

stories of puranas, *Chhanda, Chaupadi* and other folk songs are sung[24]. During Durga Puja and other important festivals the Ghoomra dancers, use to perform *Ghumra* dance to entertain the people.

***Kela Nacha* or *Baunsa Rani* (Bamboo queen)**

The *Kela* is a low caste community especially found in Ganjam district. This community is familiar for its acrobatic feats of daring nature.

The reference to *Kela Nacha* which originated in Ganjam as a household circus of the *Kela* community has been found in the literature of Kabisamarat Upendra Bhanja. It is now fast vanishing due to the lack of patronage. The male participants in this circus play drums and exhibit muscular feats whereas the female participants climb on the top of a bamboo and display difficult acrobatic feats. Because of their daring acrobatic feats on the top of the bamboo they are popularly called the *Baunsa* Rani or the Bamboo Queen. These rural circus teams used to survive in some important rural centres like Hinjilicut and at present in a vanishing stage for want of patronage[25].

***Keluni Nata***

A specific group within the Kela community of Ganjam perform Keluni Nata, which consists of rope walk, rhythmic jumps etc. and the performers are the young maidens of Kela community. The males accompany them with instrumental music using *Changu, Mardal* and flute. This performance is professional and designed to support their liverlihood.[26]

***Dhana Koila***

This is a ritual dance named after the musical instrument 'dhanakoila'. *Dhanakoila* is an instrument consisting of a new earthen pot (mati handi), a flat panel prepared from bamboo piece (baunsa kala), Kalapati, Batuli Khada (caterpillar) and Patar Chamunda. The dance is performed before the devotees (Bratacharini) for five consecutive days. Each day is marked by observance of fasting and listening to puranic recitals accompanied by music of Dhanakoila instrument. During this dance, Kalsi (woman endowed with mystique powers) answers questions posed by the mass.[27]

### *Bagha Nacha*

*Bagha Nacha* (tiger dance) is an imitative dance of the animal among the tribal people who used to perform it before and after they go for hunting. Now it is performed as a folk dance in Ganjam district. It is associated with the ritual festivals of the Mother Goddesses, Durga, who also rides on a lion. The dance is performed particularly during the time of the *Thakurani Yatra*. The dancer is surrounded by a group of *Changu* players who by beating the *Changus* encourage him to dance. In this dance the body of the dancers are painted bright in yellow and black in a stripped pattern to give the look of a leopard[28].

### *Paika Nacha*

A special feature in the cultural field of Ganjam district is the *Paika Nacha* (Soldier's dance). This is a martial dance being enacted by the *Paiks* as a part of their physical exercises. In olden days, Orissa extended her territory from the river Hooghly in north to Godavari in south with the help of a vast army of valiant *Paiks*. The *Paiks* were not in the regular pay-role of the army. They formed the rank of a peasant – militia. Though agriculture was their main occupation, they used to keep themselves prepared by regular practice and training in war techniques. Most of the *Paik* villages have *Paika-akhadas* (village gymnasium) where young people assemble in the evening after the day's work. Alongwith traditional physical exercises, they dance with sword and shield in hand to the accompaniment of the country-drum. The primary aim of this dance was for the development of physical strength and courage of the warriors. In ancient times this was unconsciously a rehearsal of battle[29].

In this dance, the *Paiks* play with their weapons like swords, spears, *lathis* (sticks), wooded gloved staff, to the tune of war drums, like victorious soldiers. They take recourse to different kinds of war tricks, strategies and plans while playing this dance. The players dress themselves like fighting soldiers by wearing necklaces made of red-beads, tiger's nail (*Bagha* nakha) and waist belt made of tiger's skin (*Bagha* pati) etc. while playing the dance. They also put on turban, fix bright coloured feathers in their head and protect their chests and shoulders by wearing metal plates to that effect.

The dance involved the physical exercise of the *Paiks*. The pseudo sword-fights, intricate movements in solo or groups of two or more with long and short sticks, fighting with spears, acrobatic feats and freehand combat are highly impressive. The exhibition of simultaneous handling of two swords or sticks by the solo *Paik* dancer is symbolic of the martial spirit and strength of the Oriya *Paiks*.

Another type of the *Paika* dance is known as 'Chakravyuha'. In this pattern six or more dancers form a *Chakravyuha* (circle) with their arms, swords or sticks attack and surround a senior *Paika* dancer. While fighting with *lathis* or swords, they tactfully exchange their partners in a rhythmic pace. They also perform acrobatic feats on the burning fire. The music of the beating drums of various types and other musical instruments create sensation and thrill among the spectators[30]. This dance drama is still in vogue among the martial section of people in this region[31] in the shape of 'Badi *Nacha*' and 'Khanda *Nacha*'[32].

***Ranapa Nacha***

*Ranapa* literally means a stilt. The dance on the stilts is prevalent among the cow-herd communities of southern Orissa. The young village dancers standing on the stilts, dance with utmost ease to the accompaniment of *dhol* and *Mahuri* (wind instrument). Songs relating to the boyhood exploits of Lord Krishna are also sung intermittently. This dance has become so popular that often in cultural festivals they are invited to entertain the people. Recently they have been also invited to perform this dance in international cultural festivals being organized by different European countries.

Sri Bhagaban Sahu one of the Chief Exponent of this dance with his party presenting this item has dazzled many spectators in an outside the state on ceremonious occasions[33].

***Chaitighoda* or *Ghoda Nacha***

*Ghoda Nacha* is another popular dance performance of Orissa. The dance is originated from the fishermen community, who celebrated the dance on the full-moon day of Chaitra (March-April). It is also performed on other

occasions. The dancers worship Goddess Baseli through this dance. Baseli is a local form of Bhairavi who is believed to be horse-headed. So, the representation of the Goddess Baseli is made of a well-decorated horse-head made of wood, painted brightly in red, black, yellow and white colours.

This dance is usually performed by three characters, the horseman, the *raut* and the *rautani*. An image of horse is made with bamboo strips and is decorated with coloured cloth pieces. The horseman enters the cockpit of the horse frame and the frame is hung in a manner which gives an illusion of a man riding on the horse. The *raut* is the main singer commentator while the *rautani* in the role of his wife joins as co-singer and dancer. The initial songs are in propitiation to the Goddess, who is said to have rescued the community during a factional war with other communities. The dance is made lively with improvised dialogues and homorous episodes. The horseman dances forward and backward with the beating of drums. This *Ghoda Nacha* or horse dancing provides popular recreation in the coastal villages of south Orissa[34].

### *Dasakathia*

*Dasakathia*, another popular performance of South Orissa and the most indigenous form of ballad singing in Orissa, is said to have been originated in the 15th century in the village Pitala[35] of Ganjam district. The word '*Dasakathia*' has been derived from the word 'dasa' means a devotee and 'Kathi' means wooden pieces[36]. *Dasakathia* (also called Ramtali) is a pair of castanets or wooden clappers, the playing of which accompany the singing. They are not hollow, but solid and resonant, fitted with a bunch of tiny ankle-bells. The clappers are held in the left hand with forefinger in between to keep them apart and played by the right hand with the thumb pressing the upper one with a jerk to strike below. While singing, the singers keep the time-beats with the clappers and sometimes workout various uncanny rhythms of percussion instruments.

This dance is performed by two players only. The senior player is called *Gayaka* (main singer) and the junior is *Palia* (co-singer). *Gayak* literally means singer and *Palia* means repeater or follower. Learned *Pandits* with extensive knowledge in the *Puranas, Sastras* and literature perform this dance art by narrating different mythological themes with touches of satire and

modern taste to entertain the audience. The *Gayak* first tells the story in lyrics and the same is repeated by the *Palia* and latter creates laughter and humour among the audience by way of making satires of many things relating to *Puranas* or other episodes. The dance continues for three to four hours and within that time one mythological story is fully narrated by the players. A lyrical stanza is often repeated by the singers saying '*Jaya Rama Je – Nabina Sundara Shyama Je*' (meaning victory of Lord Rama and Krishna).[37]

Both the players dress themselves like those of the *Paiks* with full dress from head to toe with turbans on their head. At the outset they invoke the blessings of Ganesa and Sarasvati for enabling them to do their performance in right manner. This part is called *Mangalacharana*. After the performances takes proper gear, the players play the role of different characters in the story and perform the attendant actions and events through their dramatic actions, which stir much interest among the audience touching their hearts and mind[38].

**_Kandhei Nacha_/Puppet Dance**

The *Kandhei Nacha* or puppet dance is played on the occasions of festivals by way of 'shadow play' in many parts of the region and is specially popular among the children. The peculiarity of this dance is that the dancers are puppets. Puppets of different shapes and sizes, dressed like human beings are made to play human characters by means of their pulling on and off through threads (ordinarily not visible) attached to them from behind the stage. The puppets are played by the masters as characters in a story in tune with the background music. This play requires more skillmanship and continuous practice, which is now on progressive decrease on account of lack of support and patronage of the enlightened and charitable members of the society[39].

**Prahallad _Nataka_**

Of all the folk plays of Orissa, Prahallad *Nataka* prevalent in the district of Ganjam is perhaps the most elaborate, ornate and colourful, dance drama. Prahallad *Nataka* was first conceived by Raja Sri Ramakrishna Chhotray (1857-1905), the then ruler of Jalantar[40] in Ghumsur area. Though the authorship of the play is ascribed to the Raja, it was actually written by Gopinath Parichha, a well known poet of his time. Prahallad *Nataka* is

essentially poetic in nautre. *Gayaka* acts as the interpreter of the play. The whole episode of 'Bhakta Prahallad' gets enacted through this play. The *Gayaka* has specific songs and dialogues. It has one hundred and twenty songs for the characters to sing. *Gayaka* sings in praise of Gods and Goddesses describes the events which are not shown on the stage and gives prior reference to the events. The whole text is a continuous long piece and has no scene divisions or acts. However, the *Gayaka* can take rest, if he desires, after a sequence. As the story is regarding the testing of the genuineness of devotion of Prahallad to God Vishnu, the play comes to an end after the killing of Hiranyakasipa by Nrusinghnath (Vishnu). By this the devotion for Vishnu is finally justified. In past, this *Nataka* (play) was continuously played for seven nights and later on for three nights and now-a-days for one night only. Deeply religious in nature, this traditional play is mixed variety of dramatic entertainment with music, song-dialogue, verse and prose narrative, mime and dance to form an unique tradition of folk drama[41].

**Radha Prema Leela**

The influence of Bhakti movement in India resulted in the development of literature as well as folk dance. Due to the spread of the Bhakti cult, the worship of Radha Krishna was very much popular among the rural folk of Ganjam. Poets like Gopal Krushna Patnaik and Kabisurya Baladev Rath composed a series of poems on Sri Krishna, Sri Radha and other *Sakhis* (lady attendants) in the 19th century. Radha Prema Leela, which is based on the story of the love between Radha and Krushna is a popular performing dance drama of Ganjam. The actions of Sri Radha, the heroine, Sri Krishna, the hero and the other eight *Sakhis* adorned the stage and create a romantic atmosphere tingled with religious fervour. They play with the tune of different kinds of musical instruments played by a group of talented artists in the background. Boys, in the guise of female persons pretending to be Radha and her *Sakhis* offer their devotion and reverence to Krishna, the divine one, through this dance drama.

**Saora dance**

Saora is a major tribe of south Orissa. They have their typical dance, which is held on festive occasions and marriages. In their society, people irrespective of age and sex dance to the tune of musical instruments. In their

dance at a time they move forward and backward. The dress and ornaments of the dancers are attractive. The male dancers use coloured clothes as turbans to which white feathers of fowl are fixed. Similarly, the females wrap coloured clothes round their chests and hold peacock plums in their hands. The male dancers generally carry swords and sticks and blow whistles. Their dance, which is more religious in nature is never accompanied by songs. But they have songs which they sing while working in the field[42].

***Dhangada Dhangidi* Dance**

Among the tribes of South Orissa, the Kandhs have a special flavour for dance and music. No festival or ceremony is considered complete without a dance performance in which both men and women participated[43]. The *Dhangada Dhangidi* dance is performed by the unmarried grown up boys and girls of Kandha community. In *Kui* language, Dhangada means unmarried boys and Dhangidi means unmarried girs[44]. Both girls and boys take part in this dance. But the *dhangadas* of one village do not dance with the *dhangidis* of same village. They dance with the *dhangidis* of other villages. Such dances generally are a prelude to love making and marriage between young girls and boys.

The *dhangadas* wear their usual dress, but the *dhangidis* wear special costumes during the dance. They wear a beautiful cloth known as *Kabta* which covers the lower part of the body from the waist. They put another piece on the upper part of the body covering the breasts. They put on chains of silver coins on the waist and thick anklets (bala) on the feet. The male members sing and play on the musical instruments like, *Khanjani, Dhol, Changul, Nisan* and *Mahuri*. The girls do not sing but perform the dance by moving forward and backward, the girls move backward and vice versa. The *dhangadas* sing songs in *Kui* language. Love, beauties of nature, devotion to their Gods and Goddesses are the usual themes of these songs[45]. This dance is generally performed on the occasion of marriage and other social functions.

***Krahendra* Dance**

It is a hunting and warrior dance of tribal communities. It has much resemblance with the *Paik* dance of Cuttack and Puri districts. About twelve male members perform this dance wearing *dhotis* and *saris* making *ghagra* and

put on horns with turban as the head dress. They use both *ghagudi* and *ghungur* which produce musical sound during the dance. The dancers hold axes, bows and arrows in their hands. Generally, dancers in a group in typical humourous dress which create laughter in the audience. However, the steps and movements of the dancers are not systematic as in *Paik* dance. There is no song for the dance. Drums and flutes (nisan and mahuri) are the musical instruments. The dance is always performed on the occasion of social gatherings and religious functions. This is also performed while welcoming visiting dignitaries in the village[46].

### *Sarpa Nrutya*

*Sarpa Nrutya* is performed by the Koya community of Koraput. During the dace, the male members put on caps, in which the horn of buffalo and feathers of different birds are fixed in various attractive designs. The female participants hold sticks. At first, the boys and girls stand in two lines, each one put his/her hand on the waist or shoulder of the person in front. One man standing at a separate place, sings songs for the dance and also plays the music instruments like *dulunga*[47]. The dance is performed according to the music. The dance is very popular among the Koyas of Koraput as *Sarpa Nrutya* or *Nacha* because while dancing the dancers move in a zigzag way like a snake.

### *Samara Nrutya*

*Samara Nrutya* is a unique dance performed by the Bondas of Koraput. It is a war dance, starts from a particular Sunday in the month of Pousa. The dance is performed for continuous three to four days. Before the dance starts, the male folk of the community get ready themselves by holding sticks in their hands. With the beating of drums, they beat one another with the stick. At the raising of the sound of the drum, they become more and more furious. The beating of one another stops when the music is stopped and thus the dance comes to an end. A belief is prevailed among them that the person who receives more injury to his body would get more crops in the next agriculture season. As this religious belief is the main theme of the dance, no enmity occurs between them during the fighting[48]. The Kandhs have also a separate and similar war dance, which is a style in comparison to the Krahendra dance

as mentioned earlier. During the dance they are equipped with arm and decorated with red cloth and feathers. They divide themselves into two groups and a mimic fight takes place. During the fight, if a man falls; he is set on by the opposite party and carried off in triumph as a fallen foe[49]. But all these as a part of drama and not enmity in true sense.

### *Dalkhai* Dance

*Dalkhai* is the popular folk dance of western Orissa. But the Kandhs of Phulbani district also observed this dance in a peculiar and different manner. They observe it on the Thursday of the month of Margasira. They worship the Goddess of the forest as Dalkhai and the dance is performed in honour of the Goddess. Steps and movements, *tal* and tune are like other Kandh dances. Both men and women dance, singing songs of love, humour, sexual and vulgar. They invite friends and relatives to the function. *Dhol, Mahuri* and *Nisan* are the instruments played in this dance[50].

Besides the above discussed dances, some other dances like *Bhuta Keli* of Kashingar, Laudinacha of Ganjam, Kandhei Nacha, Ghanta Nacha, Mundapota, Rama Natak, Kala Ghoda and Rajarani Nata are also prevalent in South Orissa. There are many tribal dances prevailed in the region. Among them Dhandari dance of Uttaras, Dhensa dance, Shikar dance, Disari dance, Dhap dance, Graha dance etc. are very popular among the tribals. Thus, south Orissa has been a rich store house of numerous dances or performing folk arts, over the centuries, which can rightly be regarded as her glorious and everlasting cultural heritage, attracting universal attention and appreciation at home and abroad in its multi-dimensional forms and expressions – ornamented with qualities of both head and heart, in most meaningful and conceivable ways, manners and styles. However, these arts not only serve as recreations to get rid from the busy life, but also provide enjoyment, good social relationship, harmony, physical exercise and to some extent livelihood.

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# Dalit Identity in Colonial Ganjam: A Study on the Contribution of Jayamangal Rath

*Kailash Chandra Dash*

## I

The last part of the 19th century A.D. and the first six decades of the 20th century had witnessed a remarkable social resurgence in Orissa which was a part of the social change in India. The spread of Western education, missionary activities on a large scale, the development of print-capitalism, literary awakening and the rise of a new class of reformist thinkers and activists in colonial Orissa had fostered the spirit of protest, dissent and reconstruction. This remarkable social change had appeared in South Orissa during the period under our notice. Srivatsa Panda and Jayamangal Rath of Ganjam had a major role in the social resurgence in South Orissa. Jayamangal Rath was originally an associate of Srivatsa Panda, but he became the more popular reformer in South Orissa in the first phase of the 20th century for his multi-dimensional activities. His life from 1914 to 1952 was entirely dedicated to the reformist activities in South Orissa which included the spread of Gandhian ideas and ideals in the rural and urban areas of Ganjam and Parlakhemundi zones, the spread of women education and the encouragement of widow remarriage and many other social reconstructive programmes. The most important mission of Jayamangal was the assertion and the articulation of dalit identity in South Orissa which was necessary for the making of modern Orissan society. This paper therefore seeks to present an enquiry into the dalit development activities of Jayamangal Rath on the basis of archival documents.

## II

Jayamangal Rath as an ardent follower of Mahatma Gandhi in the 1920s wanted to implement the Gandhian programme of socio-economic reconstruction in South Orissa which included the development of the so-called Harijans (the dalits). The removal of untouchability and the progress of the Harijans constituted an important part of the Gandhian programmes. But Jayamangal had not only followed Mahatma Gandhi in this respect, he had made it an articulated point of his work of social reconstruction in South Orissa. He was born in a Brahmin family in Manjusha in a typical conservative set-up; but he could not remain confined to his narrow circle and from the

second decade of the 20th century he became involved in the constructive social activities.1 His association with Srivatsa Panda, a great reformist thinker during this phase and his visit of different rural areas in South Orissa as a teacher and an editor of a magazine called *Samajamitra* had also fostered in him a keen desire to help and support the depressed classes.2 He saw in his eyes the suffering and loss of the depressed classes in the rural areas and started to protest. The issues of the depressed sections were then highlighted in the periodicals and newspapers in Orissa by many elites. But there was actually no organisation to take up their problems and the activists were unable to understand the intensity of the problems. But Rath in the 1920s while busy in the spread of Gandhian ideas in the rural areas saw this class and their agony. He came forward with a reformist mind to support them.

In 1923 Jayamangal was the secretary of the Ganjam District Congress Committee and he was responsible for organising a district conference at Belguntha on November 10 and II 1923 which was attended by many Congress workers. In that meeting Jayamangal had expressed his sympathy for the lower dalit class and wanted to convince the higher class for ending their unwanted authority over this class. He had considered untouchability as a great sin in that conference.3 After that conference he wanted to take up the problems of the sweepers of Berhampur. The sweepers (Hadis) of Lochapara area of Berhampur were the most neglected people and they came to the notice of Rath during that period.4 He first of all decided to educate the sweepers of Lochapara and for that purpose he started and managed a night school in the *hadisahi* of Brahmapur on the Lochapara road from August 1923. It was due to his effort five sweepers of that area came forward in giving up the wine drinking towards the end of 1923 and Gandhian ideas began to spread among the sweepers of Brahmapur.5 The sweepers of Brahmapur celebrated the marked Gandhi Day on January 18, 1924 at the instigation of Jayamangal. The sweepers associated them with other caste people by the effort of Rath and they were dressed with khadi clothes on that day. On that day they went through the town on a procession with Swaraj flag and with singing songs. There was a big meeting at the *hadi sahi* of Lochapara in the night of 18th January 1924 where Jayamangal presented the report of the night school. By the inspiration of Jayamangal the lady sweepers like one Sita attended the programme of the night school and many lady sweepers also came forward to end all social superstitions. They supported Jayamangal for the articulation of dalit identity.6

Jayamangal as the Secretary of the Ganjam District Congress Committee had also taken many steps to educate the fishermen community of Sorala in 1924 near to Brahmapur. As a great reformist he wanted that the fishermen of Sorala instead of worshipping the so-called *Gandhi Thakurani* should devote their time in spinning and weaving by the help of Charkha.7 His message of khadi and charkha was well appreciated by the fishermen of Sorala who had given up the practice of Gandhi worship.The dalit problem had loomed large in the reformist vision of Rath and he could not appreciate the conversion of the dalits by the Christian Missionaries. In the newspaper, The Asha from Brahmapur on 3rd March, 1924 Jayamangal had made an interesting report of the conversion process of the tribals and dalits of Aska and other areas of South Orissa. He had decried this process and appealed to all caste people to cooperate with the dalits and tribals for social progress and for the articulartion of Hindu identity. He had stated that the such conversion would help in the disruption of the Indian society and it would strengthen the Christianity at large. He had suggested that they needed to be educated first before conversion and education would make them conscious of their deplorable position in the Hindu society. They would ventilate their problems after proper education and this was necessary for Hindu Indian solidarity. He had published another article on this dalit issue in The Asha of March 10, 1924 highlighting the debate in the All India Hindu Mahasabha on the issue of the abolition of untouchability. In that article, he had strongly condemned the movement of the conservative Hindu leaders of India against the untouchability. He had presented potent argument s for the proper progress of the dalits in the Hindu society and the dalits must be given opportunity to have equal position in the society. According to Rath, untouchability was a great blot on the Hindu society and he did not accept any term like Hindu Jati and decried the terms like *Panchama Jati and Ashprushya* which were attributed to the dalits. He considered such treatment of the dalits as a blind belief and had no shastric support in its favour.

He had an elaborate analysis of the dalit issue in 1924 and he had given a long report on the dalits as the secretary of the Ganjam Congress Committee in the newspaper *Utkala Dipika* of 26th July 1924. He had described the deplorable condition of the dalits in the Hindu society where the caste people had enjoyed all privileges and they were treated as untouchables and branded as fallen (patita). He had appealed to all caste people of India to establish social

harmony by giving all possible support financially and morally to the dalits and tribals. The dalits are to be allowed to enjoy all rights with caste Hindus. They would no longer be depressed and oppressed in the society. He had declared that in the coming session of the Utkal Provincial Copngress Conference the issue of the dalits would be given proper attention. The new members of the Congress committee must be prepared to work out for the abolition of untouchability in Orissa. He had appreciated the khadi and untouchability as the two significant steps for Gandhian Swaraj and for Hindu resurgence In India. The economic, social and educational progress of the dalits would be possible only when would be prevented from wine drinking and all bad habits and they should be inspired to live equally well with other caste Hindus. Some of the volunteers among the dalits would come forward to prop up the so-called fallen. He had stated that the fallen dalits must be allowed into the temple of Patitapaban-Jagannatha and if this was not done then the people of the other provinces would come to Orissa for this mission for the uplift of the harijans and dalits. From 1924 the Utkala Swaraj Ashram at Brahmapur became the main centre for the progress of the dalits(their education and support) under the leadership of Jayamangal.8 In 1926 as the manager of Sanskar and Sevasangha of Brahmapur, he had also contributed to the solution of the dalit problems like the uplift of the untouchables by giving them material and educational aid.9 In the second annual session of the Sanskar and Sevasangha Conference at Boirani on 12th September 1926 more steps were taken by Jayamagal and his associates like Gangadhar Praharaj Mohapatra, Pitambar Mishra, Dibakar Das, Nilakantha Mishra, Gobinda Pani and others for the development of the dalits. As a result:

(1) A school was established by the sangha at village Sorala near Brahmapur for the proper education of the dalits, (2) Decision was taken for an awakening among the dalits of South Orissa by the Sangha by which they would get equal opportunity in the society with other sections.

In fact this institution named ·Sanskar and Sevasangha became very active in highlighting the dalit problems for some years under the leadership of Jayamangal Rath. He had also insisted on the formation of a Yubak Sangha (youth organisation) in that time for social harmony. He had established Patitapaban Pathagar for the enlightenment of the dalits at Sorala which was a very commendable work. He also wrote many articles in the magazine called

*Sanskara* for highlighting dalit problems of South Orissa. But he did not appreciate the proposal for membership on behalf of the dalits for nomination to the legislative Council because it would not solve their problems. He had pointed out that such nominated members would not help in the solution of the problem of the dalits. There were many enthusiastic dalit workers like Ramachandra Das of Cuttack who should be nominated to the Council for articulating dalit problems.10

The most important forum to express dalit identity in South Orissa was the Patitapaban Mission which was active under his leadership from 1926 at Brahmapur. It was included in the Sanskar and Sevasangha as a part of the organisation by his effort. Antarjami Behera of Sorala became another secretary of this forum. It was actually founded by the great refomist thinker Sribatsa Panda.11 The main aim of this organisation was to make the dalits conscious about their deplorable condition in the colonial society. It also wanted to abolish untouchability. The members of this organisation were required to obey it in their daily life. Jayamangal as an important organiser of this institution had decided to bring about a large scale of reforms in the dalit life set-up, arrangement for education and sanitation for the dalits. He had expressed his objective in a session of the Patitapaban Sangha in Brahmapur on July 25th, 1926.12 There was another session of the Patitapaban Sangh on the Sonepur sea shore near to Brahmapur on 21 October, 1926 under the presidency of Jayamangal Rath. About three thousand people attended the conference and the meeting had five hundred dalit men and women. The president in his address gave emphasis on the uplift of the dalits and abolition of untouchability.13 In 1928, another organisation was formed for the dalits like dandasi in Ganjam and Jayamangal became active in awakening them along with the hadis (sweepers). In December, 1928 an association called *Adima Odiya Samaj* was formed in Ganjam in which the president was Nityananda Mandhata and Jayamangal Rath was its vice-president. This Samaj was aimed to bring development for the dalits by eradicating all oppressive measures of the upper classes for the dalits. In a workshop organised by the Samaj in the middle of December, 1928 at Ichhapur Jayamangal delivered a talk on the problem of untouchability.14 By 1931 the Patitapan Sangha had become successful in its mission for articulating dalit identity in South Orissa under the great leadership of Jayamangal. He was collaborated by others like Chandramani Devi, Swami Dharmananda, Balakrishna Rao, Purushottama

Behera, Antarjyami Behera and Kumudini Devi. They had carried on large-scale propaganda for the progress of the dalits in about fifty villages of Ganjam like Udyana Khanda, Mahuri Khanda, Ichhapur, Khalikota-Athagarh and Ghumsar.15 A new consciousness had emerged among the dalits of Ganjam due to their efforts. In 1933, Jayamangal had taken steps for reforming the dalit society by the Utkala Sanskara Ashram at Sorala. The fishermen community of that area were properly educated by his group and they got cultural consciousness.16 His dalit development mission came to focus in 1933 when he became the secretary of the Ganjam District Harijan Sevak Samaj.17 He was assisted by Banchhanidhi Pattnaik, Parsuram Mohanty and others in this mission. They visited the houses of the sweepers (hadis) in the different hadisahis (sweeper areas) of Brahmapur and convinced them about cleaning the roads and other sanitary measures. Jayamangal had given them moral lessons for a noble life without all vices. He advised them to stop gambling and other bad habits. By the end of 1934 as the secretary of the Ganjam District Harijan Sevak Sangh Jayamangal had an elaborate reform scheme for the dalits of Ganjam and a branch of this organisation was opened at Gopalpur for the abolition of untouchability and for the reform of the dalits.18

In 1934 in the month of April Jayamangal had written a long article on the issue of the abolition of untouchability in a well-known weekly of Brahmapur named *Nabeen*. He mentioned that a group of Hindus have called themselves as caste people by branding others as uncaste Hindus and untouchables *(ajatia asprushya)*. There was also division among the so-called untouchables. A caste Hindu is one who does not touch the untouchables. This idea was rooted in the Hindu society. The Hindus do not fight against this superstition. The National Congress from the day of its activity had taken the abolition of untouchability as an important programme. Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj and Christian Samaj were all active in the mission to end this untouchability in the Indian Society. They were all making attempts to bring an all-India consciousness. According to Jayamangal although there was a feeling to and untouchability in India but there was yet no resurgent movement for this. Many Congress leaders had not given up the untouchability and many others were silent on this issue despite the advice of Mahatma Gandhi. Though all Congress leaders and activists were not in confinement but they did not like to participate in the Harijan Movement which was the major programme of the Congress then. As if they had waited for another great movement to go into the

jail. But why they did not participate in the dalit movement during this gap phase? He came to know from many Congress activists that they had no interest to participate in the movement which had no conflict or struggle. But Jayamangal had made it clear that the Harijan Movement if properly managed would bring great conflict and struggle and that there was a wider field for the activists to display their extra-ordinary sacrifice and tolerance. It would bring new image for them. The Congress activists should not pay attention to the popularity and fame and they should give due attention to proper cause. They must visit village areas for educating the mass for the cause of the dalits. They were required to visit the *Harijan Padas* for eradication of untouchability; side by side also to convince the Caste Hindus for the solution of this mounting problem. The message of the abolition of Untouchability for the dalits would be welcomed by them; but the educated Caste Hindus would not like it for their deep-rooted belief and dogmatic thought. So they needed to be frequently convinced about this vice. In Orissa such type of movement for the uplift of the dalits was still in the beginning process. The Harijan Sebak Sangha has a great responsibility in this respect. The attitude of the Caste Hindus towards the dalits needed to be changed. The doors of the temple should be opened for the harijans for worship.The so-called Panchama Schools for the dalits should be closed and the schools for the Caste Hindus should be opened for both the sections of students without any feeling. The dalit students needed proper training and good behaviour from the side of the Caste Hindu groups. Jayamangal in his comprehensive survey and report has made it very clear that the Harijan Movement would be powerful in all parts of Orissa with collaboration from all sections of the society and then only considerable progress in this respect could be achieved. In that report he had provided a powerful critique of the expression of the dalit identity in Orissa and he had explained a practical viewpoint in that respect.19 In April 1934, a branch of the Harijan Sebak Sangh was set up at Haladiapadar Santi Ashram in Ganjam under the supervision of Jayamangal. A school and a library were established there for the dalit students and in the inauguration ceremony of the two institutions both Nirmal Nalini Devi and Pandit Banikinkar Sharma had delivered very valuable discourse on the dalit resurgence in Orissa.20

From 1934 as the president of the Patitapaban Mission of Brahmapur Jayamangal had brought to light several problems of the harijans of Brahmapur. He had started a movement for the solution of the problems of the

sweepers of that area. He demanded before the Municipality for the electrification of the Hadisahi of Lochapada zone. By his continuous focus and demand street light arrangement was made for the area inhabited by the sweepers at Lochapada.21 In the month of June 1934, he had spread the message of the abolition of untouchability in the taluka of Khallikote-Athagarh and in this regard he was assisted by Brahmachari Swain and Binayak Samantaray of that area.22 He demanded the unity among all sections of the people of the villages. In a meeting people from Balantara, Sri Nalinakshyapur, Alapur, Daphuli and Pathara had attended his address. At Pathara he had set up a Village Organisation Centre (*Grama Sangathan Kendra)* which consisted of 14 members of each village from all sections of the society. Harihar Panda became its secretary. At Langaleswar he addressed in another meeting for the end of untouchability and social harmony. He had also established a centre for Patitapaban Mission at Langaleswar for the cause of the dalits and Agadhu Charan Das became its secretary. These measures promoted the dalit movement in that area. From 1920 for about 15 years the Patitapaban Mission had been successful in the promotion of Harijan Movement in South Orissa under the supervision of Jayamangal Rath. He was collaborated by the famous reformist thinker Sribatsa Panda and even the great nationalist leader Jagabandhu Singh had also supported him in 1937 when he became its president in the 16th session at Rambha.23 In that session an important sub-committee called *Harijan Prachar Sabha* was set up under the supervision of Jayamangal Rath.24

Several branches of the Patitapaban Mission were setup during his life time in Ganajm. This mission was designed to promote the dalit identity movement in South Orissa. Many high caste people and dalits like Pandit Damodar Kaviratna, Antarjami Rayaguru and dalits like Giridhari Behera and Iswar Behera had collaborated with him for the cause of the dalits. In 1939 he had taken up the issue of the fishermen community of Ganjam and had given focus to their problems in the newspaper, Deshakatha.25 An important step for the dalit identity was the publication of an Oriya monthly magazine named *Mahima* in 1940 published from the village of Khadasingi (Brahmapur). This was designed not only to publish the Mahima cult from different perspectives but also to high light social issues related to the dalits. It is needless to say that he wanted a casteless and classless society in Orissa.26 Thus Jayamangal had given considerable attention to the dalit problem in South Orissa and he was

not a dogmatic thinker. He wanted sincere devotion and cooperation from the Congress workers and leaders in this context. He was able to put forth major issues of the dalits of Ganjam and even wanted to spread of his message of dalit progress into the whole of Orissa and Bengal by his Patitapaban Mission. He had understood the problems of the Hadi community (Sweeper class) in Brahmapur and other areas of Ganjam and had remained with them in Lochapada area facing considerable opposition from the side of the orthodox Brahmins. He had also supported the cause of many other untouchables of Ganjam with a practical mind and open heart. As a Gandhian thinker and Congress activist, he had deep respect for the programme of the abolition of untouchability. He had also gone beyond that stage and had established the dalit identity which was later on followed by many grass-root level leaders like Mohan Nayak and Binayak Acharya. His constructive programmes and his articulation on the dalit issues published in different periodicals and journals in Orissa would provide a new reading of the context of dalit identity in colonial India if properly studied and documented.

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# Culture of Rayagada District: A Study on Fairs and Festivals

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As a part of Orissa, the people of Rayagada observe all the Oriya festivals with pomp and ceremony. Besides certain other festivals are also celebrated which are peculiar to this region. These festivals are totally different in character to those of general Oriya festivals. This difference has developed due to the impact of the tribal culture of the region. Telugu speaking people also constitute a good percentage of total population of the area. Besides this, the geographical situation of the area has also played a role in shaping the culture of the region. The history of the area shows that, under the British rule the region was under Madras Presidency. Hence, the region was more attached to south than to the north. So people of the area are more acquainted with the culture of south than they are connected to north Orissa. So there are apparent southern influence upon almost all aspects of its culture, like language, dress, food habits and other spheres of life. In the sphere of festivals also there is marked influence of Telugu festivals. However, it does not mean that only the Oriyas are affected by Telugu influence, rather reciprocity is maintained in every sphere. There is a typical blend of two cultures which can be seen in some of the festivals of Rayagada district. As a tribal populated district, a number of tribal festivals are observed in Rayagada.

The people of this area are highly religious and God-fearing in nature. They have developed many local festivals such as Bali Jatra, Chaitra Parba etc., which are purely of regional in character. The people of Rayagada are able to preserve and maintain their separate religious culture till today. This is the unique feature of south Orissan culture that can be better understood through the festivals of Rayagada district.

**Bali Jatra**

This festival begins five days before the *Bhadrapaba* full-moon and ends five days after it. The beginning of the festival is identified with the *Nuakhia* during on which newly harvested rice is first taken. Bali Jatra is an

occasion of great rejoicing and men of all classes put on fancy dress and dance and sing. The festival takes its name from the ceremonial planting of various grains in wet sand brought from a nearby stream and placed in a structure called Bali Ghara or sand house. But it is an occasion for many other celebrations. In Bissamcuttak Tahsil a swing is set up with its seat studded with sharp nails in which a Bejju (witch doctor) is swung after followed by sacrifice of goats and pigeons. The Bejju then walks upon burning charcoal with bare feet. Before this day he spends three nights in dancing wildly in a state of excitement, during which he prophesies both good and evil and pretends to grant boons to devotees.[1] This festival is also celebrated in other places of Rayagada district, viz., Rayagada, Gunupur etc.

**Chaitra Parba**

Chaitra Parba lasts for the whole of month of Chaitra. All the tribes participate in this festival. Men and boys go out into the forest for hunting. If they come back without anything, they cannot show their face to the women. Therefore no animal escapes from the hunters. If they get nothing, even they have to kill a jackal. Women dance and sing whole day in the streets and in villages. All motor vehicles are stopped several times on the road by streams of girls who dance and sing across the road and beg donation. It is only when a few paise are paid then the vehicles are allowed to move. Gunupur is the central place of celebration of this festival.

**Dola Purnima and Holi**

Dola Purnima, otherwise known as Holi, is observed throughout India in the month of Falguna (February-March). In this region it marks the end the contract of agriculture labourers, Jajamani relationship and any other yearly contract which are supposed to complete on that day. During the Holi or the Swing festival imitation flowers made of paper or pith are tied in bunches to bamboo poles 20 feet or more in length, called, *Dhandas*.[2] On the night before full-moon these *dhandas* are carried in procession with music and dance to a bonfire which is lighted. In the villages, apart from worshipping Radha and Krishna and sprinkling friends and relatives with coloured powder, chanting of Bhajan and Kirtan, the agricultural and weather forecasts, especially for the well-being of man and cattle and the prospects of good harvest are discussed.

At night a bon-fire of a hut specially constructed for the purpose, is made. The Holika demoness, believed significant for the prosperity of businessman. In Orissa the Hindus observe this day for offering oblations to the ancestral spirits of the family. It is believed that every year the ancestral spirits use to come to earth during Mahalaya and they were sent again to their heavenly abodes on this day. On the next day, the day of the full moon, the image of the god is placed upon a swing hung for the occasion and is swung upon it. Swings are set up in late hours in the night with singing of songs. On the following day, irrespective of age and sex, all play coloured water and coloured powder on each other. Dolapurnima is observed with great pump and sanctity at Bissamcuttack, Rayagada, Padmapur, Gunupur and Gudari. Now a days, holi is celebrated in almost all villages and towns of Rayagada district.

**Janhi Osha**

*Janhi* in English means the ridge gourd or ribbed gourd. As the festival is related with the flowers of ridge gourd it is popularly known as Janhi Osha. From the time immemorial Janhi Osha is very popular among the Oriyas, and particularly observed by the unmarried girls. The rural unmarried girls celebrate this throughout the month of *Ashweena*, with great sense of devotion, serenity and sanctity. It is observed throughout the month starting from Bhadraba Purnima to the Ashweena Purnima otherwise known as Kumara Purnima. On this occasion, they worship Lord Siva, Goddess Parvati and Brundabati, craving for a good life and a happy conjugal life[3].

**Mahavishuba Samkranti**

The *Mahavisuba Samkranti* is celebrated with great and glamour in every Oriya house hold of Rayagada. This is regarded as the first day and first *Samkranti* of the year[4]. On this occasion a *pana* or sweet liquid is prepared out of cheese, banana, coconut, mango, bela, *bhang* (Cannabis Indica) and spiced with black pepper, cardamom, clove etc. This drink is offered to the Sun God and then to the basil plant. People also observe this day as the birthday of Lord Hanuman.

**Sabitri Vrata**

Savitri Vrata is observed by Oriya Hindu married women on Jyestha Amavasya[5] or the new moon day of May – June. The observance of the *vrata* is restricted to married women only and not for the widows. It is observed in honour of Savitri who is believed to have brought her husband back to life by dint of her devotion, loyalty and love for him. Now a days it has become a regular ritual in every household.

**Ganesha Chaturthi**

On Bhadraba Shuklapakshya Chaturthi (fourth day of the bright fortnight of Bhadraba corresponding to August-September), the birth day of Ganesha is celebrated. The elephant – headed God of wisdom and prosperity is a popular deity. Known by many names, he is worshipped as Vighnesvara, or the remover of all obstacles. His birthday is celebrated all over the Rayagada district. On the day, the clay idol of the Lord is installed in decorated pandals (temporary). It is kept for a day or two or more according to the will of the worshippers. Whatever may be the period, the idol is worshipped until it is ceremoniously immersed in rivers, canals or tanks. This festival is also observed with great enthusiasm in educational institutions, commercial establishments, youth clubs etc.

**Mahalaya**

Mahalaya is observed by the people on the day of Ashwina Amavasya or the new moon day of Ashwina corresponding to September-October. Specific food dishes are prepared on this day to offer to the Goddess. The women read a book specially meant for the occasion at the time of the worship. They strictly obey the instructions given in the book and offer the cooked food on sixteen different leaves of pompkin creeper. However, this particular day is also meant for an another ritual. On this day, people offer special offerings to their dead ancestors. That is called as 'Mahalaya Shradhha" [6]. They observe this in order to get the blessings of their ancestors for the welfare of the family. This is observed almost in every houses of Oriyas of Rayagada..

## Dasahara

During Ashwina Shuklapakshya (bright fortnight of September-October), Dasahara is celebrated throughout the district. This festival is the biggest Shakti festival of the year and during these days one hymn is heard in every corner of the district. Generally the puja continues for four days from saptami tithi to Dasami tithi. The dasami is called 'Vijaya dasami'. It is believed that Ramachandra killed Ravana on that day. Clay idols of Goddess Durga are made and worshipped in huge decorated pandals in many places of which the celebrations held at Rayagada, Gunupur and Gudari deserve special mention. Durga puja is also celebrated with due pomp and ceremony at several Shakti pithas in the region of which Goddess Majhighariani of Rayagada, Maa Markama of Bissamkatak are important.

The tribals of Rayagada like Paraja, Bhumia, Kandha, Gadaba, Utara are also observe Dasahara but in their own way. They worship Goddess Hundi Devi on that occasion and make goat, hen and pig sacrifices. There are Dasahara grounds in every 20-25 villages, where yatras are held on the Dasahara night. Music and dance parties from each village perform their dance and drama in those grounds. The *dhangadas* and *dhangidis* use to choose their life partner in Dasahara yatra[7]. The Savaras of Rayagada district also worship Goddess Durga.

## Janmastami

The festival, celebrated in honour of the birthday of Lord Sri Krishna is known as Janmastami. It is held on *Bhadrab Krushnapakshya astami thithi*[8] or eighth day of the dark fortnight of August-September. The people congregate on the Sri Krishna temples and listen to the holy book, which deals with the birth of Sri Krishna. Many devotees observe fasting on that day till the puja is over.

## Kartika Purnima

The month of Kartika is a sacred month. During the month many Hindu devotees especially old women and widows perform *Habish* and take one vegetarian meal a day before sun-set and use to visit temples everyday and

listen Kartika Mahatmya, a religious book. The last five days of the month is called *Panchuka*. Many people observe it with austerity and take on vegetarian diet. Throughout the month, in every evening a lighted lamp called *Akashdipa* is suspended on a high pole. This is done in order to show light to the ancestors who are invited to home in this month. In the early morning of the Kartika Purnima day, or on the full-moon day the people after taking their holy dip in the rivers, canals or tanks, float tiny boats made of the under-layer of banana plants or pith with lighted lamps fixed to them. Flowers, betel leafs and betel nuts are placed on that boat. The floating of the tiny boats is done to remember the past maritime glory of the Oriyas who sailed to Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Bali, Sri Lanka and Myanmar for overseas trade.

**Rath Yatra**

The Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath is observed on Asadh Suklapakshya dwitiya tithi (the second day of the bright fortnight in the month of Asadha corresponding to the month of June and July). It is observed in the same process as it is celebrated at Puri. During Rath Yatra, idols of Jagannath, Balabhadra and Suvadra are placed on cars (ratha) and are taken out if procession at Bissamcuttack, Rayagada, Gunupur, Gudari, Padmapur and many other places. In Gunupur, there are two Mausi Maa temples situated in the Ratha Jatra field. Two Rathas are prepared here during Ratha Yatra, which carry six idols to two Mausi Maa temples separately.

**Makar Samkranti**

This festival commences in the month of Magha (January-February) and marks the entrance of the sun into the house of Capricorn. In other words, from this day, the sun starts moving from the tropic of capricorn north wards and thus sun's winter solstice come to an end. The Hindus believe that if a person dies during summer solstice, it would be easier to get a berth in the heaven. As a post-harvest festival, it is celebrated joyously. People gather in Siva temples and worship. They also exchange *makar chaula* (a mixture of til, molasses, Arua chaula, pieces of coconut and peanuts) on this occasion as a token of good relationship[9].

## Ugadi

The ugadi or new year's day of Telugu community is observed on the full-moon day of Chaitra (March-April). On this occasion a great deal of rejoicing, merry making and feasting takes place amongst them. Everybody puts on new clothings. Houses are nicely decorated with powders, festoons and screw pine leaves and twigs. On this day, before taking the principal meal, everyone tastes a special semi-liquid preparation called *pachadi* which is prepared with new tamarind, jaggery, coconut, condiments and margosa flowers. The significance of mixing bitter margosa flowers with sweets is apparently to enable people to realise and reconcile to the hard fact that life on earth is a mixture of joys and sorrows. On this day people usually visit temples and shrines to seek divine blessings and to have a noble conscience. Sweets and other eatables are sent to relatives, friends and neighbours as a gesture of good will. Those who can afford also feed the poor and needy people.

## Pongol

Pongol is observed for three consecutive days during Makar Samkranti. This festival is originally of Telugu festival and the Telugu people residing in the region observe this festival. This three-day festival is the biggest event of the year for them. The first day, which falls on the day before the Makar Samkranti is called *bhogi*. It is said that on this day Rama killed the demon king Ravana. In memory of that, people burn a bulky log considering it as Ravana on the roadsides. The traditional cakes like *idly* are prepared on the occasion. They enjoy the day by feasting among the friends and relatives and merry making. The second day is known as *Pongol*. On this day, they worship and offer *Shradha* to their ancestors. All the member of the family wear new dresses and rejoice the day by feasting only among the family members. The third and the last day of the event is called *Kanugu*. The people offer food offerings to their ancestors on this day. They try to offer every item which their dead ancestors fond to eat during their life time. The *prasads* of the second and third day is only taken by the family members. Even the married daughter of the family is allowed to take the same. On this last day, coins are cleaned. Turmeric and kumkum are applied to these coins. However, now a days this tradition of Telugus is not confined to themselves only. The Oriyas of the region also observe the festival with great enthusiasm.

## Saraswati Puja

Saraswati puja is celebrated throughout the Rayagada district.on the Magha Shuklapakshya Panchami (fifth day of the bright fortnight in the month of January-February) with usual gaiety and enthusiasm. She is the Goddess of learning and also of music. On this occasion people decorate the image of Saraswati with flowers and worship, children wear new dresses. In many homes children are initiated to the alphabet known as *vidyarambha*. Students observe fasting and take *prasad* after the puja is over. Every educational institutions and almost all youth clubs celebrated the festival with great austerity[10].

## Naga Chaturthi

On the naga Chaturthi day, the Kartika Shuklapakshya Chaturthi tithi (the fourth day of the bright fortnight in the month of October-November), the women folk of the region worship the images of *Naga* and *Naguni* (male and female serpents) near an ant-hill in order to protect their family members from snake bite. The cultivators revere Naga (cobra) as it protects the crops by killing the rats. They also worship snake as *kshetrapala*. Telugu peoples of this area celebrating this festival as Nagula Chathurthi. They offer eggs, milk, special cakes prepared with wheat-floor, sugar and banana in the holes.

## Sivaratri

Sivaratri festival is observed in all Siva temples throughout the district on Phalguna Krushnapakshya Chaturdasi tithi,[11] otherwise known as Siva Chaturdasi. The devotees observe fast for the day and vigil awake throughout the night to worship Lord Siva. The night is called Sivaratri or Siva's night and celebrated because it is believed that Lord Siva had swallowed the poison on that night which came out of the ocean and saved the world from destruction. In memory of this event the devotees also spent sleepless night. At midnight a lamp called *Mahadipa* is taken to the top of the temple and is kept burning throughout the night. The devotees break their fast only after the *darshan* of *Mahadipa*[12]. Sivaratri is observed with great pump and sanctity at Minajholla, Chatikona, Paikapada, Padmapur Jogomunda hills, Rayagada and Gunupur.

**Sitala Sasthi**

From the days of Sivaratri, it is believed by the Hindus that Siva starts his meditation keeping himself away from all amorouses. This meditation ends when he marries Parvati in the Jyestha Shukla Panchami. The day after or the Jyestha Shukla Sasthi tithi is observed as Sital Sasthi[13]. *Sital* in Oriya means cool. As it is believed that Siva became cool after his marriage with Parvati, the day is called 'Sital Sasthi'.

**Somanatha brata**

The Somanatha brata is observed on Ashwina Shukla Dasami tithi or the tenth day of the bright fortnight of Ashwina (September-October) [14]. The particular day is also otherwise known as Dasahara. Generally, Somanath brata is observed by the married women for the betterment of the husband and children. A legend regarding Somanath brata says that once the king of Malaba, Bira Bikram Patali was cursed by Lord Siva and was infected by Leprosy as he had disregarded Somanath, Lord Siva. To propitiate the God, the queen of leper king observed the *brata* on Dasahara. Lord Siva was pleased by her prayer and devotion and the king regained his health and got back his throne[15]. Ever since then this ritual is more intensively practised by the women folk.

**Sudasha brata**

Lakshmi, the Goddess of wealth is worshipped by every section of people of the region every Thursday as the same day is believed as the day of Goddess Lakshmi. Special festival to propitiate Lakshmi is observed in the month of Margasira on every Thursday of Margasira (November-December) with great devotion. However, besides this a special *brata* is observed for Goddess Lakshmi and that is known as Sudasha brata. During the whole year, if the Shuklapakshya dasami tithi of any month falls on Thursday, Sudasha brata is observed on that day[16] by the women folk. The day is regarded as the most auspicious day for worshipping Goddess Lakshmi.

**Sasthi Osha**

Sasthi is known as the Goddess of fate. It is believed that she decides the fate of each and every people at the time of birth. So, to propitiate her Sasthi Osha is observed. The Goddess is also believed to act as the saviour of children from illness and danger[17]. So from the time of birth of a child she is worshipped. On the sixth day of a child's birth Goddess Sasthi Devi is worshipped and that is observed on every Bhadraba Shukla Sasthi tithi till his/her parents are alive[18].

**Diali Parav**

For the safety and betterment of their cattle, the tribes of Rayagada district observe Diali Parav on Kartika Shukla dasami tithi. Everyone decorates their cattle and worship them in cattle shed with coconut and flower. They also give rice, cloth and money to the cowherd caste people. The Bondas call this festival as Gebursing Gige. The Jatapu tribe of Gunupur region observe 'Nandiama' a Telugu influenced festival during this period. They use to worship Haragouri. In that month, the Dongria Kandhas of Bisam Cuttack and Muniguda region observe 'Punapadi'[19].

**Festival of Majhighariani**

Chaitra Parba is the annual festival celebrated at the Majhighairani temple during the month of *Chaitra* (April). During this month every tribal village celebrates its annual festival to appease the presiding deity. It is also associated with the glorification of spring season and the joy of plenty after harvesting is completed. The five-day festival starting on the 11th day of *Suklapakhya* in the month of *Chaitra* ends on *Poornima (*full moon) day. During the festival, the sword of the deity is taken out around the town in a procession to ward off evil spirits. If any devotees feel the divine presence at their doorsteps, they appease the Goddess according to their mite. Different cultural programmes, especially religious in nature - are organized in the evenings which draw large crowds to the temple. Special ceremonies and *homas,* as per Vedic rites, anchored by learned pundits are performed on these days. On the final day awesome ceremonies like walking on red-hot charcoal, swinging on spiked boards by the *archakas* are performed and it is believed that goddess manifests before the devotees through the *archakas* and communicates with them which reinforce the faith in the deity.

**Festivals of Maa Markama**

The important festivals of Maa Markama are Basantika Dasahara and Saradiya Dasahara. The Basantia Dasahara, otherwise known as Chaitra Parba is held during the month of Chaitra for about a week to celebrate the onset of spring season. This is the period of festivity and marry making for the tribals. The Dongaria Kondhs living in 64 hamlets on Niyamagiri, comedown and worship Goddess Markama with offerings of animals including buffaloes. The animal sacrifice gradually created social problems. Tribals quarreled among themselves for a share of the meat of the slaughtered animal particularly the buffaloes. This often led to bloody fights among them. Hence, of late this has been given a different form. With the efforts of the local administration the system has been changed. Now a days the live animals are only offered to the Goddess and are returned to the devotees who may kill it outside or may retain it as a sacrificed animal never to kill till its death. The Chaitra Mangalabars (Tuesdays) are celebrated with equal fervour and dignity by tribals as well as the non-tribals. The Saradiya Darshana is also celebrated with full dignity in honour of Maa Durga, Maa Markama. During this festival, on the Sasthi day, the sword of Maa Markama is take around the town in a big procession to ward off the evil spirits and to worship it as the guardian and protector of the town. People worship the sword with utmost devotion and welcome it at their doorsteps.

Tribal population forms a major part in Rayagada district. They have their own festivals. Each and every tribal festival is a public festival. They celebrate them with total freedom with drinking, feasting, singing and dancing. Sacrifice of animals and birds to please the God and Goddess is a custom with them. They are the children of nature, born and brought up in forests and mountains and this outlook is reflected in their festivals. In fact, their festivals cover all aspects of their living which is an organic, festive, ritualistic whole. Some important tribal festival of the region are Pous festival, Kandula yatra, Baruni yatra, Kedu yatra, Bali yatra, Chaitra parab, Rani parab, Puspunei, Mandiarani, Bijapandu, Susugige, Bimuja Pandu parab etc. However, because of the impact of modern civilization and education, the tribals have relinquished many of their customs, rites and dances and accepted many customs from the Oriyas. Yet, their festivals are not lost their natural vigour.

The most important feature of Rayagada is that there is an apparent Telugu influence upon almost all aspects of its culture. Like language, dress and food habits, in the sphere of festivals also we can observe the marked influence of Telugu festivals. Not only the Oriyas are influenced by the Telugus but the Telugus are also influenced by Oriyas. And there is a unique blend of two cultures is seen in the festivals of the region.

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